

A COMPARISON OF THE
SOCIAL THEORIES OF
JOAQUIN DICENTA
AND
BLASCO IBÁÑEZ
AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR WORKS,

by

Elizabeth C. Patterson,
A. B. University of Illinois, 1927.

Submitted to the Department of
Spanish and
the Faculty of the Graduate
School of the University of
Kansas in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts.

Approved by



Chairman of Department.

Advisor.

PREFACE.

The statement that Joaquín Dicenta is the Blasco Ibáñez of the stage supplied the motive for this study. The forty-seven titles by both authors served for the comparison. My thanks are due to Professor Arthur L. Owen, to Professor José María de Osma for kind assistance and encouragement, and to my mother for her painstaking help.

Elizabeth C. Patterson.

A COMPARISON OF THE SOCIAL THEORIES
OF JOAQUÍN DICENTA AND BLASCO IBÁÑEZ
AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR WORKS.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Introduction	1.
The Agrarian Problem	15.
Men and Women	36.
Religious Question	63.
Alcoholism, Gambling and the Bull Fight	83.
Other Social and Economic Questions	95.
Conclusion	129.
Bibliography	144.
Index	147.

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

Joaquín Dicenta y Benedicto has been called the Blasco Ibañez of the stage. Like the great national novelist, in his third period of production Dicenta was more interested in social problems than in any other phase of Spanish life. Both saw all levels of society and wrote vehemently of the evils peculiar to each. Both, however, are subject to the criticism that they did not see all sides of society in one perspective and were too narrow in their impressions and in the aspects they chose to discuss at any particular time. While Blasco Ibañez confined himself rather largely to the novel and the short story, Dicenta expressed himself in all phases of literature, and was rather more successful in the drama than elsewhere. (1).

Since the life, or manner of living of a man reflects itself more or less vividly in his writings it may be well to include here some discussion of the life history of each of the authors.

(1). Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrado -Vol. XVIII, p.943.

Joaquín Dicenta was born in Calatayud, of Aragonese parentage, in 1863.

He was left fatherless at a very early age and his mother had but little success in curbing the restless, prodigal nature of the boy. He was expelled from the military school to which he was sent. For many years he lived a very dissipated and bohemian life, and during this period he wrote for some obscure periodicals. He has two motives in writing; first of all he had to earn a living, and, secondly, he was very deeply interested in the problems presented by social conditions. His first play, romantic in nature, El suicidio de Werther, written in 1887 was produced, through the efforts of Tamayo y Baus. From that time on his works received some notice. In 1892 Dicenta wrote his first didactic play, showing his socialistic tendencies. This play, Los irresponsables gained serious public attention, and the praise of critics. In 1895 was written Juan José, his most important drama. Juan José and Dicenta have come to be indivisible, -as if they were only one person. Dicenta wrote other social

drama before and after this masterpiece but none compares with it. (1). Juan José served to establish Dicenta's reputation. He wrote lighter works, even some zarzuelas and one farce, and he wrote both prose and poetry of a non-dramatic character, exercising his talent in almost every field of literature but he excelled in the sociological drama. He wrote until the year of his death, 1916.

Dicenta lived impetuously, forcefully, and passionately, and he wrote as he lived. His writings show that he lacked the control resulting from concentrated and methodical study, just as he lacked control over himself. His personality shows quite as strongly in his writings as it did in his influence over his friends and acquaintances. He squandered his words as he squandered his life. And because such a temperament is not usually a happy one, is rather more inclined to be despondent, so more often than not, Dicenta's works are depressing. While he shows us momentary happy glimpses they are usually but contrast with his dark and shadowy pictures of misery and despair.

(1). León Pagano, Al través de la España literaria,
Vol. 2. pp. 59-60.

There is no doubt but that he painted life as he saw it, and from the point of view of a member of that society. He lived among the laboring class, was one of them. Because of this he could no more help writing for them and in sympathy with them than he could help drinking and loving and forgetting those whom he had loved in his free bohemian life. He felt the falsity and injustices of society, and he wrote to combat those faults, for he knew them to be the causes of crime and misery. Back of his works lies a generous impulse, love of honor and a romantic aspiration, but his details of life, manner, types of character, speech and dress are realistic, and Dicenta has photographed faithfully the life of his day. He answers the criticism that the theater is a center of corruption, a reflection of baser passions by saying: "¿Pero qué desean estos señores? ¿De dónde vamos a sacar los dramas nosotros? ¿De la vida real que ante nuestros ojos palpita, o de una vida imaginaria cortada a patrón, sentida a capricho de pudibundos cursis y falseada en beneficio de cuatro mozuelas insubstanciales y de una docena de caballeros bien alimentados .(1).

(1). León Pagano, José - Al través de la España
1 literaria, Vol. II, p. 68.

And he further states: "La verdad tiene derecho a reinar en el teatro: debe volver a ocupar el sitio de donde la arrojaron en mal trance para nuestra gloriosísima historia literaria: debe volver como dueña absoluta sin trabas que la sujeten ni cortapisas que la detengan". (1).

Dicenta is a man of his book; no duality exists. (2). Since he is such a man of action his works are full of it, his style makes small use of detail and is very full of force. He rises behind his character and cries out, as though ready to fight all opponents; "Sí, señores, aunque os pese, tenéis que oírle, porque ello es verdad."

Dicenta believed that truth must return to the stage in spite of the fact that the public wished merely to be entertained and the author runs great risk of losing his popularity if he introduces in his drama any social or political question because the public does not want propaganda. He felt keenly that art would never be satisfied without a true presentation of life.

(1). Leon Pagano, José - Al través de la España literaria, Vol. II, p. 74.

(2). Ibid. Vol. II, p. 61.

As far as religion is concerned Dicenta lived an indifferent life. His interests were centered in the broader and more general social problems. He had, however, respect for the beliefs of others. The clerical element plays some part in his works. He spent all his altruism and emotion in an effort to better social conditions for the masses by his pen. He seems romantic at first but later becomes more sober, more realistic, modern and more sincere in his social appeal. (1). If Dicenta were not a philosopher and keen thinker he could not have combined the elements found in Juan José, where he brings the social problem to the theater, gives literary form to the crux of the economic revolution, discovers the social evil and from it produces a modern drama. Dicenta involves in even the most insignificant story a thought, a protest or a problem.

Because of his own nature his attitude toward society is pessimistic. While many another author has seen and written of like conditions, labor conditions, intemperance of the people, injustice, and unwise distribution of charity,

(1). Cejador - Historia de la lengua y literatura castellana, Vol. 10, p. 118.

none have written with equal force or intensity. These problems he presents in an impetuous, almost a violent manner, and occasionally he manages to rise from the morbid concentration to an outlook for the future which is almost hopeful.

Dicenta makes all else in the play subordinate to his appeal for justice, in contrast with such as Galdos who uses these questions as background for their plot, and so place the social problem in a secondary place. Because Dicenta often wrote actually under the stress of poverty, because he really experienced the feelings of reckless and unbridled youth, because he actually knew his women of whom he wrote, one feels keenly the sincerity of his realism. He may at times treat unjustly the upper levels of society, but that is because he was writing from a poor man's point of view - his own, in fact.

Now we turn to the other author in the comparison: Vicente Blasco Ibáñez was born in Valencia, 1867, and was of Aragonese parents. He was sent to the local university by his parents who were merchants. He was a revolution-

ist even as a student. He was imprisoned at various times for his ideas, the first occasion being in 1885 because of an anti-governmental sonnet which he wrote. He fled to Paris and so avoided further imprisonment for nine years. He was exiled to Italy because he lead a public demonstration against governmental measures used to suppress insurrection in Cuba. After three months in Italy he returned to Paris where he was arrested and imprisoned for two years. In 1894 he was released, and then begins his career as a novelist. Up to that time his literary efforts had been largely journalistic. He founded a republican newspaper, *El Pueblo*, in Valencia and made of it one of the most influential journals of Spain. Elected republican deputy from Valencia, Blasco Ibáñez became the leader of his party. After eight years in the Cortes he retired from politics and devoted his time to writing. He wrote several novels of propaganda during the World War, Los Cuatro jinetes del Apocalipsis and Mare nostrum, being outstanding. He later retired to France and died there, January 28, 1928.

The work of Blasco Ibáñez may be divided into three periods, first the regional novels,

second, his propaganda period, third, the period of the purely popular novel. It is with the latter that we are chiefly concerned in this study. Not until the publication of his third regional novel La barraca, in 1898, was Blasco Ibáñez well known as a writer. Since then he has become an international figure in literature. His period of most prolific production was from 1898 to 1909, during which time he published twelve novels. After that time the volume of his production decreased. Blasco Ibáñez had really intended doing a series of four novels of South American life, but at the outbreak of the war, he devoted his talent to war novels because of his intense loyalty to the Allies.

Although we have proclaimed our special interest to be in the novels of propaganda we find Blasco expressing his social theories even in his early regional novels. These latter, so replete with local color and effective use of dialogue of the Valencian people, have been adjudged by critics to be his best books. These regional novels are enlargements upon some previous short stories, Cuentas Valencianas and La condenada.

Blasco was a born fighter and a lover of the people. He felt deeply the pity of the situation of the poor laborer who is kept by traditions and customs in a state of medieval serfdom, a fact which has retarded Spain in her development to a pace much slower than that of the rest of Europe. He seems to have felt keenly the need of stirring those people from their lethargy and ignorance and, in fact, his efforts in behalf of the common people have served to arouse in certain parts of Spain a spirit of discontent, as a beginning for progress.

In his youth the novels of Zola and Hugo were at the height of their popularity and Blasco was early inclined toward the naturalistic school. So in his work one must distinguish between those novels in which Blasco evidently had a living and very personal interest and Naturalism assumed a regional garb, and those in which his business has been exclusively a work of cold observation and reasoning to set forth a problem.

He is strong as a robust oak. His exuberant vitality revels in the realizations of art, in politics and also in action. (1). Seeing

(1). León Pagano, José - Al traves de la España literaria, Vol. II. p. 165.

Blasco Ibañez, that may be better understood. Vibrating with force and youth always, he shows a body endowed with prodigious elements of life. It is to be observed, in fact, that Blasco's books always have a vital note; even in the midst of the tragic there is something which elevates the feelings, something which proclaims the impulse of ecstatic life. Blasco is the apostle of combat. But he is fundamentally optimistic, convinced that the final victory is assured if the struggle can be maintained. (1). In his words in Parliament as in his writings he shows the constant desire for combat. And yet the powerful, fighting man has the heart of a sensitive man. Like all contemporary thinkers, he is preoccupied by the hard problem of man and land, and he is with the oppressed, Los de abajo. (2). The gospel of constancy in labor needs preaching in Spain and Blasco preaches it with impressive and sometimes rather incorrect eloquence.

Blasco works spasmodically and feverishly, often thirty hours at a stretch. (3). A singular feature, too, is that he rarely corrects before

(1). Fitzmaurice-Kelley, James - Chapters on Spanish Literature, London, 1908. pp. 250-51.

(2). Rubén Darío, -España contemporánea, p. 223.

(3). Zamacois, Eduardo - Vicente Blasco Ibañez, p. 17.

the copy is returned from the publisher, and then he eliminates generally one third. He quickly forgets details of his work, and anecdotes are told of his having commented upon a character or event in the works of another author, only to be reminded that he himself had used that in one of his novels. The news always came as a surprise.

The styles of the two men are rather in contrast. Blasco has very definitely planned plots, his social theories brought out coincident with plot development. On the other hand, Dicenta impresses one with the fact that he is writing solely to cry out against society. His plot is a minor element; his accusations of wrongs done are the important thing. He seems, sometimes, impulsive, hasty, bitter and radical, but he is always sincere and earnest. While Blasco Ibáñez preaches, Dicenta rages.

With both authors the problem of industry in general and the matter of poverty are of first importance. Dicenta treats of this in Juan José, Aurora, Piedra a Piedra, Aniversario Negro, Mares de España, Espumas y Plomo, Traperías, Paraíso Perdido, Los bárbaros, and in the articles called Crónicas. Blasco's turn of the subject

dwells particularly upon the land problem with which he deals in La barraca, Cañas y barro, La bodega, and El intruso.

With Dicenta the next most important question is the relationship between the sexes, which he treats in all his writings to a greater or less degree. He deals more fully with it in the plays Sobrevivirse, Daniel, Luciano, Aurora, El crimen, Los de abajo, De la batalla, Paraíso Perdido and Spoliarium; and in the novels of the collection Las novelas. Blasco treats of it all through his works and especially in Los enemigos de la mujer.

The evil of drink is dealt with by Blasco Ibáñez in La bodega, particularly, and to some extent in other works. Dicenta deplores that evil but does not dwell upon it, possibly, because of his own weakness.

Prison reform Dicenta mentions in Juan José and El lobo and also in Los de abajo and De la batalla.

Blasco's Sangre y arena strikes cuttingly to the point on the matter of bull-fighting sub-

stituted by the Spanish for a national industry.

The question of the church was not prominent in the mind of Dicenta, and so did not receive from him the attention it did from Blasco who discussed it in La Catedral, Entre naranjos, and El intruso.

Both deal with the question of society in general, lamenting its unfairness and tyranny. While one orates emotionally, the other coolly observes, analyzes and preaches an expository sermon.

THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM.

One of the things apparently uppermost in the minds of both Blasco and Dicenta was the economic situation. There is some difference, however, in the particular phases in which each was most interested. Blasco was deeply concerned over the absentee landlord system. Poverty and the problem of the unemployed are of prominence in the works of Dicenta.

The distribution of wealth is a social question which involves the happiness of every individual and so naturally attracts the attention of all who are interested in the possibility of benefitting mankind. We may consider the economic problem as the basis of all social life, - the cause of the majority of crimes, of injustice, of immorality, of political corruption; in fact, it is the cause of the greater part of all those abnormal situations which cause unhappiness to individuals and weaken our social institutions. Money is an essential element of modern civiliza-

tion, a necessary evil. And because the economic question is so closely related to the various other problems, and may be considered a cause of each of them it has often been dealt with as the one big social problem. Because we so closely connect poverty, industry and the ineffectiveness of charity as it is administered we may consider the economic situation as the basis of all other social evils.

Rubén Darío wrote in a book on the Spain of his day that Barcelona, the city which he calls "the pulse of Spain", shows the atmosphere of a changing social order; workmen are beginning to read the press and to discuss the revolutionary spirit.(1). A priest answered an inquiry on the republican feeling of the city of Cádiz by saying "All the workmen of Cádiz are republican, anti-catholic and a great number are anarchists." (2).

Marcías Picavea describes the national problem (3) after this fashion; Spanish society is in much the same condition as the lands, - depleted by lack of care and ruined by former regime. The situation appears hopeless because

(1). Rubén Darío, La España Contemporanea, Paris, 1901.

(2). Id. Chapter XI.

(3). Marcías Picavea, El problema nacional, pp.93, 103, 104.

there must be capital so that men may work, and men must work in order to create capital. The rest of the picture of Spain as it appears to him is rather dismal. Education is impossibly deficient. Agriculture is centuries behind that science in other countries. And as to morals, the Spanish are ruled by passion rather than reason; vices have terribly corrupted Spain as to political conditions.

The question of land-holding is quite basic. Joaquín Costa has recognized the demoralized condition of land tenure and the crying need for change.(1). He has various remedies which he offers for the horrible condition in some territories; agricultural training as a part of the school course of study; public schools in the necessity for co-operation; better roads; farmer's banks; agricultural syndicates; fewer political bosses; revision of the national expenditure. He feels that the land owner should change his methods of production so as to produce more and thus lower the prices of foods. He also urges an increase in wages. "El problema agrario o cuestion

(1). La bodega, p. 93.

social se reduce a estos términos: que el journalero, aun con la ayuda de su familia, no gana lo estrictamente preciso para sustentarse: que para vivir vida medianamente humana, necesita con absoluta necesidad bastante más de lo que gana; y que no ganándolo salda el deficit con privaciones, con escaseces, con enfermedades, acostándose todas las noches con hambre, llegando viejo a los cuarenta años." (1).

This land problem in Spain today is very largely an outcome of the wars of reconquest against the Moors, who left so many traces behind, and whose blood flows in the veins of the Andalusian peasants. For sometime, so Arabian historians tell us, the Andalusians and Moors lived peaceably together, the land greatly subdivided and well cultivated. This fact was overlooked by the Spanish kings and when the Moors were expelled they divided the land as rewards among the feudal barons who had helped in the campaign. So, for the first time were created immense holdings under one owner in place of numerous small portions. Since that time the prevalence of political bosses, or "caciquismo".

(1). Nöel, Eugenio, Señoritos, chulos, p.30.

One can travel for hours and never come to the limits of the property of one land holder. The land is in the hands of a powerful agrarian trust, and the shareholders are surely looking to their own interests enough to keep the social order just as it is. Because they are so desirous of profits, and the legal owner does reap all of the benefits, they continue with the ancient method of tilling the soil, the result being a pitifully shortsighted inefficiency. So good, rich land becomes worthless. If any modern machinery is introduced at all, it is to combat the working man who is looked upon as an enemy of the trust. The threshing machine is the only modern machine in use, and this was brought in because under old methods the workmen were able to plan strikes before the threshing was finished, and by the use of the threshing machine two months work could be done in two weeks. (1).

The policy is to keep tenants in seclusion, allowing no gatherings or public meeting places for fear of rebellions. There are no

(1). La bodega, p. 195.

small villages where farmers from round-about ~~and~~ may meet to discuss community problems. In place of grouping of farm houses dotting the landscape there are only occasional ranches where the workmen are slaves tilling the bitterly hated land. For mere discontent has grown into an intense hatred of the soil and its owners who have made existence precarious and comfort in life non-existent. In La bodega, the dwellings of the obreros in the terrible aspect remind Salvatierra of a prison; the walls white-washed and the animals living there with the people, while clothing and harness share equally the hooks on the wall. While in prison each inmate has his own sleeping mat, here no such luxury is found and food is poor and unbelievably scarce. (1).

Dicenta has not presented this matter in a fashion so extreme as that of Blasco. He does not feel as does Marcías Picavea that agriculture in Spain is the least technical, most barbarous of all economic factors. There are lacking three elements to make it there as elsewhere a national industry; enterprise, capital and technical knowledge. Los bárbaros is a good treatment of

(1). La bodega, p. 132.

the agricultural question .(1). The landlords lived well and flourished at the expense of the laborers. In De Piedra a Piedra he tells the story of the lonely life of a shepherd who never returned to the village where he saw things that made him envious, full of hatred and unhappy. He was embittered because the landlords fared better and lived without working. But worst of all was that they had despoiled him of his sweetheart and then imprisoned him on false pretexts. For this reason he made a great effort to forget those painful associations and his connection with that society which had made him so miserable. (2). In another story of the same collection he tells of laborers in the field who are not allowed to rest like other animals. They work in the scalding sun in the hottest part of the day, and if one is prostrated two are allowed to leave just long enough to take the stricken one out of the way of the other workers. He says, "Así pensaba yo, frente a aquellos símbolos del trabajo servil, del esfuerzo humano esclavizado por la codicia,

(1). Los bárbaros, Madrid, 1912, pp.123-24.

(2). De Piedra a Piedra, Cartagena, 1905, pp.52-55

de la necesidad explotada por el egoísmo. " (1).

They are a race cooked by the sun and enslaved by misery.

The land question, especially in Andalucia, appears in *Traperías*. "Triste espectáculo el de las tierras sin cultivo, que los pájaros no quieren entretener con sus cantos porque no encuentran alimentos que picotear, y los labriegos cruzan de prisa, contemplándolas rencorosamente porque no pueden hundir en ellas su herramienta y ganar, trabajándolas, el pan de sus hijos. ---Triste espectáculo el de esas tierras, espectáculo del cual distrae al caminante el paisaje de los cultivados terrenos que lucen sobre su espléndido escaparate el poderío del campo andaluz. La tierra cultivada paga con usura el esfuerzo de sus cultivadores, pariendo olivares donde la aceituna broncea entre las hojas verdes; etc. Tierra incansable en dones, que no satisfecha con cubrir su superficies de tesoros, los esconde en su fondo también para que el minero los busque y descubra". (2). The laborer now becomes independent. The fertility of the soil has served

(1). De Piedra a Piedra, Cartagena, 1905, pl5.

(2). Traperías, Madrid, 1905, p. 87.

as an aggravation, and the tiller of the soil crosses his arms in defiance of the man who has refused to increase his pay. He will not work unless his demands are met. The landowner replies that he cannot give larger wages because he must limit the expense of production to compensate for the cost of transportation, loss and trouble. Then he in turn crosses his arms in defiance.

"De estos dos cruzamientos de brazos surge el conflicto que comienza por la negativa del amo, por la declaración en huelga del obrero, y acaba por matar al obrero de hambre, y por arruinar, no al propietario, que esto aun siendo muy sensible, sería poco porque se trata de un individuo; al Estado, a la nación, forzados a sufrir las tristes consecuencias que esas cosechas paralizadas, esos propietarios faltos de brazos, y esos jornaleros muertos de hambre, han de provocar forzosamente." (1).

He speaks further and rather more bitterly of the situation between the land owners and the laborers in the field in De Piedra a Piedra;

(1). Traperías, Madrid, 1905, p. 90.

"Aquellas séres no descansan. Mientras el amo de la heredad apila duras y suma beneficios, mientras la dueña se abanica y los jóvenes se enamoran y los segadores igual los mujeres que los hombres, los viejos que los mozos y los mozos que los chiquillos doblan sus cuerpos hacia la tierra caldeada y esgriman las hoces y amontan los haces y andan y trajinan debajo del sol, amenazados por la asfixia que se cierne pulmones y por el tabardillo que se cierne sobre sus sesos". (1). It is merely an expression again of the same conditions which he meets everywhere, the overlord fattening and enriching himself at the expense of the poor people whose lives depend upon what he pays them for the slave-like service they render.

Dicenta treats this as the basis of all evils in his plays, sketches and novels. Frequent use of contrasts is his device for impressing his readers with the wretchedness of the poor and the injustices of the rich as they exemplify society in general. In Los bárbaros, for example, he presents descriptions of the banquets and parties of the rich to make more vivid the picture

(1). De Piedra a Piedra, Cartagena, 1905, p. 207.

of the misery caused by the drought. The descriptions of unfortunate humanity are often directly connected with the situations which are the causes of them. Los bárbaros shows how the poor farmer who is oppressed by his landlord is quite helpless. The drought caused terrible suffering for the working man, while the overlord was concerned merely with a means of keeping the hungry mob quiet. He was touched by their afflictions only to the extent that their discomfort and discontent threatened his easy existence. The condition was really pitiful. "Los labradores, sentados en lindes; cruzaban los brazos, contraían los rostros, pateando en endurecida tierra. Los braceros recorrían las calles en actitud mendicadora, en solicitud de un socorro, casi siempre recogido por los mostredores tabernarios. Contra estos se amontonaban aquellas infelices, para enloquecer su miseria, para maldecir juntas, para insultarse en disputas agrias, que remataban a golpe de puño y corte de cuchillo. Las mujeres de los braceros requisaban inutilmente rastros y planteles, cajones y armarios. No había que espigar; no

había que empeñar tampoco. Dejando a sus criaturas encomendados a su suerte, se dirigían a casa de los señorones, a llorarles su angustia, a limosnearles el mendrugo. Las mozas, sintiendo en sus estómagos los mordiscos del hambre juntábanse por las noches al borde de la fuente poniendo más oído que a los requiebros del galán, alcahueteo de las viejas terceras que les ofrecían manjares a elección, plata a ríos, si, admitiendo los consejos de su experiencia, echaban repulgos de honestidad a un lado. ----- Los almacenes de comestibles solo fiaban a quienes llevaban vales suscriptos por los propietarios a cuenta de jornales; el Municipio andaba mal de fondos; algunos auxilios llegaron por oficios del diputado gobernante, pero quedaron entre los adictos a su política. No era cosa repartirlos al tun tun."(1)

However, as far as the landlords were concerned, they were quite discomforted that there would be no crops and concerned over the threats of the laborers. Otherwise, for them life went on as easily and luxuriously as ever. There are suggested various ways of combating the oppression of the poor. Some of them leave the country and seek wider opportunities on another continent. But not all can do this. The reaction of those left

(1). Los bárbaros, Madrid, 1912, pp.123-24.

is usually to rise up in organization and endeavor to avenge themselves, or to change their conditions. This is the more usual and general reaction, so in Los bárbaros whole district of working people are turned by hunger into barbarians who kill all the wealthy people and destroy their property. It is evident that their condition was improved very little, although no conclusion is drawn as to the results of such an outbreak. Dicenta is just in his attitude toward the strikers and he feels the attitude of the oppressors to be :

¿Quién piensa en los despreciados y los muertos?
 ¿Qué puede hacer esta gentuza desarmada y hambrienta?
 ¡Bah! ¿Que se amotinan? Se carga contra ellos.
 ¿Que el hambre les hace gritar mucho? Se les tapa la boca con un puñado de calderilla. No merece la pena. Sigamos explotándolos y enriqueciéndonos. Para someterlos están los soldados, para dominarlos nuestro oro; la sangre acoborda, el oro humilla."

In such a way he is able to explain the attitude of the rich toward the poor. Government intervention was of no avail, and the strike went right on. Force had to be used; lives were lost; property was ruthlessly destroyed; unhappiness was universal.

Blasco Ibañez writes thus of his own country in La bodega, "In traveling through Spain the foreigner is astounded at seeing so many churches, priests and friars, so many fields cultivated by a method almost prehistoric, the barbaric and picturesque customs and the central square filled with men waiting to be hired."(1). Blasco was keenly interested in the agrarian problem and early in his career he shows that interest in his third work, La barraca, which is a protest against the absentee landlord system. He also suggests a solution in two of his propaganda novels, La catedral and La bodega. He showed interest in another way, also. While on a visit to the Argentine, where he went to give a series of lectures, he bought large tracts of land and established two villages to encourage the emigration of the agricultural class for whom in their own country there was no hope of becoming independent, thus trying to alleviate the condition of the peasant class in Spain.

Blasco realizes the power of century-old

(1). La bodega, p. 93.

customs and institutions and firmly believes in revolutionary methods for the complete reorganization of industry, religion and education. He is neither Bolshevik nor anarchist, but a staunch believer in the necessity of social reform. His socialism, if he preaches any at all, is of the sort that is not effected suddenly or spectacularly by anarchistic methods, but the type that is attained only by the slow process of generations of popular education. Nor do his preachers of social propaganda succeed in raising the people out of their misery, any more than do Dicenta's revolutions and strikes serve any constructive purpose.

Blasco believes this system of land holding to be the cause of all the evils of society and says through the lips of Salvatierra: --"todos los males de la humanidad provenían de la tierra por unos cuantos miles de hombres que no siembran y sin embargo recogen, mientras millones de seres hacen abortar al suelo sus tesoros de vida, sufriendo un hambre de siglos y siglos". (1)

It is impossible for the tenant, no matter how thrifty he may be, to own the land he works.

(1). La bodega, p. 151.

The land trust manages the land to that effect. And as long as the workmen are forced to reap a harvest of which they will not have one grain as share, there can be no hope for relief of the backwardness of agriculture. (1) The main theme in La bodega is a criticism of the deadening influence of alcohol on men's ambitions and spirits, and the plot centers about that and an attempt to awaken the workmen to rebellion. But he brings out, too, that the cultivator loves his little piece of land as a prolongation of his family and if he were allowed to own this little bit of land there need be no fear of rebellions and uprisings. The author's solution here of the agrarian problem is the division of the land into small tracts, owned by the tiller of it. If the agricultural class is ever to become a class in Spain as elsewhere, they must have an opportunity to become more than slaves. They must be allowed a means of expressing their common needs and grievances. Blasco frequently, throughout his works, speaks of the solitude and seclusion in which the peasant lives, and suggests a common meeting place as a clearing house for various

(1). La bodega, p. 108-9

social and political ills of the peasant folk.

In La Catedral he suggests a social organization on the communistic idea of land tenure. This would seem to be socialism and is not what the author means to imply. He has in mind, rather, a social organization involving the division of land into small units with a common ownership of the agents of production and a sort of approach to equality in the distribution of the products of industry. (1).

But Blasco's feeling is not all onesided. While he condemns the large land owner for his greed in acquiring as much land as possible and valuing the land only in proportion as it brings him wealth, he censures the peasantry and lower classes for their lethargy in the face of so many injustices and such obvious oppressions.

But the crowning glory of all of Blasco's efforts to set forth propaganda on the agrarian problem is in La barraca, a novel usually classified among his regional novels, and in point of time it did come in his earlier period. But there is a good deal more than a suggestion of

(1). La Catedral, p. 295.

the propaganda type of novel in it. This is directed against the absentee landlord system. The first two chapters portray, graphically, the situation.

Tío Barret, an honest and hard working man farms a little piece of land cultivated by his forefathers six generations before him. The land is owned, however, by Don Salvador, a Jew, who collects exorbitant rents. Tío Barret, ever an example of industry, works harder and harder to pay the rent, and when his wife falls ill he finds that he cannot make up the unreasonable amount. Tío Barret is ordered out of the land, and he is so filled with fury at having to leave this land he has so strived to cultivate, he kills Don Salvador. His neighbors in the Huerta swear that they will never allow his land to be farmed by another slave to a heartless landlord. It becomes a desolate waste. "Cosas horribles era lo que inspiraba la contemplación de los campos abandonados; su tétrica miseria aun descollaba más con el contraste de las tierras que los rodeaban, rojas, bien cuidadas, con sus correctas filas

de hortalizas y sus arbolillos, a cuyas hojas daba el otoño una transparencia acaramelada. Hasta los pájaros huían de aquellos campos de muerte, tal vez por temor a los animaluchos que rebullían bajo la maleza o por husmear el hálito de la desgracia." (1)

The people are all exploited by their landlords and burdened with increasing rents. One day a new family appears and settles on the forbidden land. Batiste, the father, labors unceasingly to support his family on the spot of barren ground. Due to their resolution that no landlord should profit by this ground, once Tío Barret's, the people of the vicinity begin a subtle, relentless persecution of Batiste. All is a culmination of their hatred for the absentee landlord. One of Batiste's children even dies as a result of the violence of his playmates. They refuse Batiste irrigation rights. His daughter is stoned when she goes to the village fuente for water. The neighbors are finally successful and Batiste is driven from the land, succumbing to the hatred of the ignorant and infuriated peasantry. His hut is burned and we see the last, pathetic picture thus:

(1). La barraca, p. 23.

"Y todos, con resignación oriental, sentaronse en el ribazo y allí aguardaron el día con la espalda transida de frío, tostados de frente por el brasero que tenía sus rostros atontados con reflejas de sangre, siguiendo con la inquebrantable pasividad del fatalismo el curso del fuego, que devoraba todos sus esfuerzos y los convertía en pavesas tan deleznales y ténues como sus antiguas ilusiones de paz y trabajo." (1).

His descriptions of phases of daily life in and about Valencia are realistic and full of local color. The picture of the narrow minded and ignorant peasant folk make us feel deeply the pathos of social conditions which maintain or tolerate this type of peasantry or this system of land tenure anywhere in the modern world.

As in so many of his works, pathos is here the feature of appeal. He reaches his reading audience by moving them to pity. La barraca has been called his masterpiece, a work of art, by many critics. Ruben Daris says of it: "Libros como ese no se hacen por puro culto de arte,

(1). La barraca, p. 312.

sino que llevael consigo hondos anhelos humanos;
son páginas bellas pero son también generosas
acciones y empresas apostólicas. " (1).

(1). Darío, Rubén, La España Contemporánea, Paris,
1901. p. 223.

M E N A N D W O M E N .

There is a problem which seems to defy solution - that of the relationships between men and women. It is an ever-present problem, and a vital matter. Dicenta seems to realize fully the great difficulty of the situation. He is obsessed by the problem. He offers no suggestion as to remedy, it may be because he realizes there is none. In his works he discusses the results of disregard of marriage laws; how disastrous such disregard is to the parties concerned, and how tragic for the children. He brings out the necessity of marriage but finds that it is not a real solution for his problem. His trend of mind is such that he sees more unhappiness from mismatched marriages than from absence of legal ties. Dicenta is a pessimist in this case, for he occasionally pictures a perfect love, but the realization of that love is usually made impossible by circumstances. He feels that women must love, but he objects both to marriage and to the freer relationship. In his more optimistic moments Dicenta seems hopeful for society as a whole, but he offers no

hope for the individual. This is, of course, an obvious inconsistency unless he looks for a miraculous process, quite the opposite of the usual evolution, in which society is bettered, and then the individual's wretched state of affairs is changed. So the entire human system must have seemed quite impossible to him.

First, we shall discuss Dicenta's view of the disregard of marriage laws. This situation may affect the man, the woman, or the child. Una mujer del mundo illustrates the case of a man disastrously affected by such a circumstance. The woman is already married but is attracted by a young man who falls desperately in love with her, unsuspecting of her married state. She leads him on; goes to a country resort with him, and finally leaves him because she cannot bring herself to leave her husband for him. She had been brutally unfair to the boy, for she had taken from him all that he had to give her and in addition had robbed him of his faith in women.(1) His life was filled by a wretched mistrust.

(1) Mujeres, p. 215

La infanticida is a poignant picture of the effects of illicit relationship upon the girl. Hortensia, the youngest child of a noble family has been reared to believe that the most dishonorable thing in the world is the birth of an illegitimate child. One of her friends has been ostracized because she had fallen. That example was held before her. A friend of the family, the Marqués had been deceived by his wife, had left her, and is now paying court to Hortensia. She trusts him but he betrays her trust. Then he flees when she discloses to him the proof of his guilt. Hortensia suffers mental anguish alone and successfully hides her condition up to the time of the birth of the child. She is terrified at the event and tries in vain to keep the tiny baby quiet, strangling it in its first moments of life. She is more terrified now than ever and tries to rid herself of the child by carrying it to the river, but she is apprehended by the watchman. She is arrested, disowned by her family and undergoes public trial. Due to the effectiveness of the lawyer's plea she is freed, but she finds liberty worse than death could be. Although she

suffers intense moral pangs because of her sensitive nature, she is so true to the Marqués throughout that she will not tell his name. Such is the result of the unconventional relationship upon the girl. Dicenta's inclination is to censure society for its attitude and he says, "Esa mujer ha nacido y se ha desarrollado en una atmósfera artificial, falsa, que vosotros, nosotros, todos creamos en nuestra ignorancia, en nuestro mal entendido concepto del deber y de la honra. Esa mujer ha oído repetir una vez y otra y otra a sus padres, a sus hermanos, a sus amigos, a la sociedad entera, que cuando la hembra se da a un varón, sin cumplir tales o cuales requisitos está deshonrada; lo que reputado en la mujer casada por santo y glorioso, es afrentoso e imperdonable en la mujer soltera; como si el matrimonio, ese matrimonio que los hombres instituyeron fuese una consecuencia humana y no una accidente social." (1)

Dicenta does not go into detail on the life of the child who cannot bear his father's name. But in Juan José we find just such a child.

(1). Novelas - Infanticida , p. 223-24.

His father was never known to him, even his mother was not sure who the father was. Even before the birth of the child the mother had the impulse to kill him, which she would have done had she been brave enough.

In this connection we may discuss Dicenta's greatest work, Juan José. Although various propaganda elements may be found in this drama, it is after all, and more than anything the story of the love of two people of the laboring class. Rosa was the first and only person to show any kindness or affection to Juan José who was abandoned very early in life. They were very fond of each other and lived together, omitting the formal marriage ceremony, but remaining true to each other. But they were poor, very poor, and so gradually their love lost its power to assuage Rosa's longing for material things. Juan José steals, for the first time in his life, to get those things for her. He is caught and imprisoned. On his release he finds that his one time employer, Paco, has finally succeeded in usurping his place with Rosa, and kills Rosa, unwillingly and Paco gladly. So in Juan José he shows two sides of the question.

Although Dicenta does not devote an entire novel or play to the development of such a character he clearly shows his sympathy for them. "¡Hijos sin padre! Frase dolorosa cuando la muerte deja las crías de hombres sin el amparo vigoroso del macho que las engendró. Frase horrible y cruel, cuando el macho vive y abandona la cría a los débiles cuidados de la hembra que partiera con él los goces supremos de la reproducción, la dicha inmensa de perpetuar su carne, la tarea sublime de contribuir, con deleitosísimo tributo, a la inmortalidad humana. ¡Hijos sin padre, teniendo el padre vivo! ¿Puede haber nada tan bárbaro como ésto?" (1)

He goes on with his condemnation of the faithless man, saying he is bestial. Then he adds that such a comparison is unfair to beasts because they are by instinct more faithful to and solicitous of their mates and children. It is not a law of nature but infamy which governs such things. "¿Es el hombre quien hace eso, quien permite eso? No; los que así proceden no pueden, no deben ser, no son hombres. Hay que decirlo en

(1) De Piedra a Piedra, pp. 241-42

desagravio de la especie. Sí, hombres son; hombres que, prevertidos, desnaturalizados por los egoísmos, por las ruindades, por las consideraciones y respetos y conveniencias de la vida social, olvidan las leyes naturales y hacen llamar hijos sin padre a desdichadas criaturas que tienen el padre y la madre vivos sobre la tierra." (1)

In addition to numerous examples of the unhappiness brought by unconventional relations upon the man, woman and child concerned, he shows countless pictures of misery and sorrow and remorse caused by the great source of human distress - the uncontrolled passions of men and women. He does not consider common law marriage as immoral as long as the man and his wife are true to each other and manage to live according to certain standards, as did Juan José and Rosa. He does not criticise them for having overlooked the marriage ceremony. On the other hand, he criticises society for making that ceremony an expensive luxury. However, he does see the harmful results of free relationship between the sexes.

In Encarnación he tells the story of his own loves and puts it in the third person. He calls

(1). De Piedra a Piedra, pp. 244-45.

himself Tomás, who is an only child and pampered by his widowed mother. He has been dismissed from a military school because he was too unruly. Now he is a temperamental author who writes both prose and poetry. Since they have been using up their resources for his education he refuses to go farther in his studies because he must go to work and make money to support his mother. We shall give him credit for those higher motives. His first love is a momentary one, Isabel, a childhood playmate. She deceives him and then tries to force him to marry her because the real culprit has disappeared. Tomás refuses in the face of the danger of the other's blame being shifted to his shoulders. After this disillusionment he falls into less worthy paths of pleasure. He finally goes to live for a year or so with Encarnación, who is a very attractive girl. He writes poetry and edits a paper to provide a living for them. She is domestic and very good as long as he is with her; but he becomes tired of her and goes back to his mother. He turns next to Luisita, who deserts him. Then all sorts of misfortunes befall him; through his fault his mother loses everything; his paper

fails. In the midst of all this, Encarnación comes to see him and forces him to have an interview with her. She tells him of her love for him, how she had had to go back to her former evil life after he left her, and of her decision to die rather than go on that way. She has taken phosphorus and can live but a few hours. Tomás is now completely overcome by sorrow and takes her to a hospital where she dies. Tomás' mother sells her last possession to pay the expense of a funeral for the girl. She, too, suffered because of Tomás' and Encarnación's acts. And although she tried to make amends she began too late. Tomás is now remorseful and determines to do something to better others of her class. His attitude has changed materially from the feeling he experienced after his own disillusionment. He expressed this after the affair with Luisa.

"Lo de Luisita le importaba muy poco. La chicuela fué para él pasatiempo. Sólo su amor propio sufría! Ser suplantado por un comiquillo de la legua le crispaba los nervios." He was utterly selfish in that he expected to leave her when he chose but that she must be faithful to him. But Tomás shows a rather belated nobility after the final

blow as he says, "Yo tengo la culpa. Yo que la arranqué de su vida, que le hice ver, disfrutar otra más honrada y después la he abandonado brutalmente sin más razón que mi egoísmo. ¡Soy un miserable, un canalla! Sostenida por un joven, Encarnación hubiera sido modelo de mujeres, santa madre, quizás-----. La suicida no era ya un individuo; era una concreción humana; el símbolo de todo una casta educada en ambientes de prostitución y miseria. Aquella casta se revolvía en la ignorancia, en el envilecimiento, en el crimen, por falta de apoyo, por culpa de un bárbaro egoísmo que no oxigenaba su atmósfera." (1) The whole submerged half of humanity which Encarnación symbolized should have the debt he owed her. Her death was a warning and a guide of the path for him to follow. "Aprocurar el advenimiento de un mundo nuevo donde abandonos, injusticias, ignorancias, prostituciones y miserias no pudieran ser; donde la humanidad toda comulgase en alteros de amor, debían tender sus esfuerzos. Correspondía esta obra a los fuertes. El lo era." (2)

(1) Encarnación, pp. 196, 197, 199

(2) Id., p. 209

Dicenta, as mentioned before is rather inconsistent in his attitude because here he blames the egotism of men in general for much of the unhappiness. In a later period he lets the blame fall on the woman. In Dos naturalezas he creates the impression that the woman is always to blame. Here a lovely woman tempts a man who has power to resist. (1). In Luisa, a very wicked woman tempts the author, who struggles with himself and conquers. Here again the woman is to blame. (2). In Ana we see a picture of an altogether charming and worthy woman; but Dicenta does let it go without saying that she will some day, like all others of her sex, deprive some man of his liberty and happiness. (3). In Por Bretaña he shows himself hopelessly a misanthrope as he goes to the extent of saying, "Nuestras mujeres son todavía, en su mayor parte, por vicios de educación, de herencia, de sociales contrafacturas, más causa de martirio que de goce para el hombre que está a su lado." (4).

In El crimen de ayer, a drama, Dicenta has painted the most gripping and powerful picture of

(1). Spoliarium, p. 52.

(2). Id. p. 110.

(3). Mares de España, p. 109.

(4). Por Bretaña, p. 166-67.

the outcome of such relationship. The play centers about a group of Bohemian couples who, for convenience, have omitted the formality of the legal marriage ceremony. Of the entire group, Julian and Carmen are the only couple who have a child. After a time Carmen feels the position of the child is precarious and tries to exact from Julian a promise that he will give the child the protection of his name. Julian promises everything but immediate action. At last he tires of Carmen and tries to leave. She knows that it will be the last time she will see him; she seizes a pair of scissors and stabs him. The curtain falls, dramatically, as he is dying. Carmen's position is really pitiful. She has deceived her parents, and deserted them for Julian. They had been happy until Julian's desire for fame and property and a marriage of convenience had intervened. He had become ashamed of her and the child, and would not be seen on the street with them. He frequently had returned to his parents who overlooked his boyhood follies. They encouraged him in his study of law, and his courtship of a girl of social

position because, they say, the fact that he has once been foolish ought not stand in the way of his later success and happiness. She has long been hurt by his indifference but refuses to believe that he is deceiving her. His refusal to give a name to the child she worships is, however, the final blow and she is aroused to the point of seeking revenge. Here is a picture of stark tragedy for both man and woman; but the child is blissfully unaware of his misfortune.

Since Dicenta is quite obsessed with the sex question his works are full of examples like those mentioned. They, however, serve to bring out the contrast with relationships sanctioned by legal procedure. The main point is that society is responsible for the suffering of the woman who is not usually any more to blame than the man. Dicenta does not approve of the double standard for he realizes its injustice. He brings out the indefensible attitude of society toward the fallen woman in several cases. The most compelling plea of all for justice is in the lawyer's speech to the court in La infanticida. He says, "Esas causas

existen; son producto de una organización social raquítica, antinómica, defectuosa, llena de contradicciones; que se juzga perfecta en sus leyes, que olvida las imposiciones de la naturaleza y - por olvidarlas crea conflictos y provoca crímenes de los cuales hace responsable al individuo, mientras ella colectivamente se exculpa". (1).

The woman has merely obeyed an impulse that man made laws cannot impede. According to custom the man abandons her; so she must bear the brunt of it, take all the blame, the hate, the suffering, the shame. And she is terribly ashamed, feels the child will be ever present ignominy if allowed to live. So she kills it. The crime is terrible. Such crimes should be prevented. The duty falls upon society. The lawyer continues, "Para ello es preciso que nosotros, entidades sociales, hombres serios, jueces sabios, muchedumbres curiosas, no abofeteis con nuestro desprecio a la mujer caída; que le tendáis la mano; que amparéis su desdicha; que si esto no basta, modifiquéis nuestras leyes por impotentes o por defectuosas; que cuando una mujer, os enseñe a su hijo, no preguntéis cómo le

(1). Novelas, p. 223-26.

tuvo y que, ajenos a toda ofensa, respetando a la madre, y solo porque es madre os inclinéis ante su paso en reverencia". (1). Acting justly it is society which should be set upon the bench of the accused.

These illustrations bring out quite well that the results of relationships unsanctioned by law are usually very unsatisfactory and undesirable. But after all, is marriage a solution? If men married "para constituir un hogar dichoso; para enaltecerse por el trabajo; para mirarse en los ojos de una mujer bella y virtuoso; para tener una compañera en sus alegrías". (2). Dicenta answers the question in a most pessimistic way. In El sino (3) he gives an amusingly exaggerated picture of married life. An astronomer has progressed rapidly, overcoming great difficulties and hardships. He is well on the way to fame when he falls in love. When he is married his troubles really begin. Children come in rapid succession. Ultimately he has to support eight children, a mother-in-law with asthma, and a crazy sister-in-law in addition to his wife. He earns very little, and is pursued constantly by

(1). Novelas Infantocida, p. 225-26.

(2). De la batalla, p. 69.

(3). Paraíso perdido, p. 87.

collectors. He finally contracts pneumonia while working late in his laboratory, and dies. But his misfortunes do not end there for after ten years his body must be moved from the rented grave so again his peace and rest are still disturbed. The poor man was happy and lives among his stars while he was single, but married life brought him down to earth with its responsibilities. Married life made a real hell for him, and even death was not a sure relief. Here then, is the case of an unsatisfactory marriage, although husband and wife loved each other.

The drama Luciano (1) relates the story of a mismatching. Luciano is an artist whose wife is entirely out of sympathy with his work. She cares nothing for art, makes no effort to appreciate it. She is jealous of her husband's work and of any one who appreciates and understands it. She quite frankly admits that once she loved her husband and although she now cares nothing for him she is determined to prevent him caring for someone else. Luciano, a splendid character, speaks of his love for his wife as a lost illusion. "Hay

(1). Teatro, Luciano, Vol. II.

una época de la vida en que todo hombre y más que ninguno, como nosotros de sueños y de ilusiones se alimenta, siente anhelos inexplicables y acaricia con su imaginación un fantasma vago de mujer, que no tiene forma precisa, ni realidad tangible. Este fantasma es nuestro sueño de amor, la juventud que necesita completarse en presencia de una naturaleza donde todo ama, desde el sol que se descompone en átomos de luz para cubrir y fecundar la tierra, hasta el polvo mismo de la tierra-----. El hombre fascinado por este espectáculo sublime quiere amar también porque el amor es ley de su existencia.--- Así amaba yo a Julia, ¡a Julia, no! a las ilusiones de mi fantasía, encarnadas en Julia. Soñaba y desperté." A real love comes to Luciano later but the conventions make it impossible for them to be happy together. (1)

Mi Venus provides another illustration of the same sort of thing. A young artist loves his model, Rosario, but he marries a wealthy marchioness for social and financial reasons and partially because he thinkshe loves her. As long as they are traveling and he is neglecting his work they

(1) Luciano, p. 22

are happy, but their lives are out of harmony when he returns to it because they fail to understand each other. Finally the artist leaves his wife and returns to Rosario for consolation. Dicenta implies that common law arrangements, such as that with Rosario are likely to bring more happiness than actual marriage.

Un divorcio (1) is the story of a couple, another artist and his wife, who suddenly find themselves out of tune with each other to such an extent that they must separate, although so recently they had thought that they were meant for each other.

Dicenta uses La Infanticida again to show unhappy married life. The marques finds that his wife loves a painter and is angered that someone else should give his wife the love he himself refused her. Then he leaves his wife; she has lost her honor, her happiness, even her freedom, because she now feels that she must retire to a mountain resort while her husband goes on his happy way and proceeds to wreck Hortensia's life. "El 'perfecto caballero', el hombre

(1). Mujeres, p. 108.

ideal triunfaba en la corte como una resurrección de los andantes paladines, mientras su esposa, recluida en una casa montañesa, vivía para sus hijos y para la memoria del pintor muerto a golpe de hierro por el brazo experto del marqués." (1).

El triunfo de la condesa (2) illustrates well how happy married couples are not always so because of a mutual love, but often because of baser emotions and ambitions. Between the countess and a woman friend there is a great deal of rivalry. The friend's husband dies and his widow buries him with much pomp and splendor. Soon after the count is killed accidentally and the countess mourns him because she is expected to do so. The funeral brings a great deal of satisfaction to her, however, because she feels that she can at last outdo her friend, and she is very proud to think that her husband's burial was more costly than the other's, and that she looked finer in her mourning than the other woman had. That was her love for her husband; such was the happiness of their married life.

(1). La infanticida, p. 178.

(2). Mujeres, p. 169.

Dicenta has an ideal of the happy union but he finds it exemplified only in the mating of birds. "Eran dos. La hembra, fina pequeña con el plumaje blanquinoso, el pico menudo y las patitas sonrosadas. El macho, más grande, más fuerte con la cabeza adornada por un moño de color de oro, era un cantor infatigable y un amante rendido y leal. Siempre estaban juntos. Allí en lo alto de la pajarera construían todos los años un nido chiquitito, como viven los que aman, ¡como yo he soñado vivir! ¡Como ya no viviré nunca!" (1)

Marriage has with man rather an aspect of being a misfortune and a great hindrance. So he speaks of it in El sino. (2) "Anatolio la erró casándose ---- ¡Mala tarde la del hermoso abril en que abandonó su Observatorio y fué a recostarse contra aquel banco del Retiro y sintió dentro de su carne el llamamiento de la primavera! Venganza del planeta Tierra, encolerizado con los desprecios del astrónomo, fué la aparición de la criatura femenina. Por sueño la tomaba Anatolio. Al presente el sueño se había vuelto mujer propia con sus hijos y añadidura de madre vieja y hermana

(1) Mujeres, Dolores, p. 108

(2) Paraíso perdido, p. 124

en irremediable soltería."

There are a few pictures of ideal love where marriage would mean happiness, but Dicenta, in his deep pessimism, has shown that there is always some obstacle impossible to overcome. The love of Pablo and Cesárea in Daniel is ideal but because they both see the need of sacrifice to carry on their work of uplifting their fellow man they decide against a union. Here is an altruistic love made impossible of realization because of altruistic motives, the very motive that had made that love what it was. The love of Luciano and Rosario in the drama Luciano comes to nought because of the artist's wife and the fine standards of the girl. Juan Francisco is an example of social prejudices as they hinder marriage. Juan and Anita are deeply in love but they cannot marry because Juan has killed the brother of Anita, although he was justified in doing so. The father is very bitter and Anita respects his wishes. Thus the lovers are kept apart. In El tiesto de rosas a young man is kept from having the girl he loves because her parents know nothing of his family and is not a noble. In despair he kills himself. (1).

(1). Spoliarium, El tiesto de rosas, p. 161.

Is there is no solution to the problem? Apparently there is none. He believes it an essential part of human nature to love, and especially is this true of women. He speaks of it in connection with the case of a woman whose prejudices are finally overcome by her suitor, although she felt strongly that she should be faithful to the memory of her dead husband. "No eran ellos; era la vida, que entraba despaciosamente, callada, traidoramente, en el gabinetito, con el aire de fuera, con los alientos primaverales que del jardín subían. La vida reclamaba su puesto en el gabinetito; en él quería ostentar su imperio la primavera triunfadora. -- La vida no se detiene. La muerte no puede ser estorbo de la vida. Amad y vivid." (1). His philosophy, a liberal one, is that we should "gozar primero y morir después; porque esa es la ley humana." (2) As always he is a pessimist and says, --el dolor es el compañero más seguro y constante del hombre. No dudo de la inmortalidad del alma porque no dudo de la inmortalidad del dolor". (3) In this connection he feels that love has the great responsibility, for love is such an ever-present

(1). Paraíso perdido, p. 85.

(2). Spoliarium, p. 163.

(3). Id. p. 116.

source of disturbance. "Amor prendió en ellos é hízolos, como a todos los hombres en los comienzos de una pasión, cobardes, recelosos, y huraños. Amor es, cuando empieza, casi odio. En odio suele concluir." (1).

Blasco has much less to say of the relations of men and women. It may be because Marcial Pícaro's criticism of the Spanish as a people that act on impulse rather than by reason applies more particularly to Dicenta than to Blasco. At any rate Blasco is not so impassioned on this subject. He does occasionally speak of cases of wealthy men taking advantage of poor girls. He is concerned with women as characters rather than as to their relations with men. His most concentrated criticism of women is found in Los enemigos de la mujer. This is the story of a picturesque character, Prince Michael Fedor, who has become tired of women, and so retires to his villa at Monte Carlo. There he gathers about him a group of men, who are in financial straits, and agrees to give them lodging and food in a sort of club fashion so long as they do not bring women into the agreement. One by one

(1). Paraíso perdido, p. 17.

his followers are eliminated as they become involved with various women. Finally, the Prince himself is more than captivated by a woman of the world, a childhood enemy. She had lived far too freely, but remains a fascinating personality in spite of her experiences. They are to realize their love when the news of the death of her son in the war comes. This love for her son, the identity of whose father she does not know, is the one redeeming feature of her character. The opening statement of the book is indicative of Blasco's attitude, "Man's greatest wisdom consists in getting along without women." (1). He becomes more fervent in his condemnation of women and says through the lips of the Prince: "Women! They work their way into our lives, and finally dominate us, and want to mould our ways to suit their own. Their love for us is after all merely vanity, like that of the conqueror, who loves the land he has conquered with violence. They have all read books-- nearly always stupidly and without understanding, to be sure, but they have read books - and such reading leaves them determined to satisfy all sorts of vague desires, and absurd whims, that succeed only

(1). Los enemigos de la mujer, p. 1.

in making slaves of us, and in moving us to act on impulses we have acquired in our own early remantic readings. --I know them." In speaking of Alicia, the woman in the case, in particular he said: "Her pride in her beauty was boundless. What were the ambitions of men compared to the satisfaction of being loved and desired? Only the glory of warriors, of blood-stained conquerors, whose names are known even in the remotest wilds of the earth, equals the glory that a woman feels in the sense of universal power over men." So from Los enemigos de la mujer we get the idea that Blasco thinks women are very vain and foolish, and of superficial mentality. They are, in fact, -- "an artificial product of civilization, which, somewhat like hot-house flowers, have reached their maturity with a complex, perverse beauty".

La tierra de todos presents as the central character Elena, a perfectly vain and heartless creature who succeeds in wrecking the lives of four men. Her extravagances have brought her husband to a financial crisis. He has an opportunity to re-establish himself in South

America but makes the fatal mistake of taking Elena with him. A rather sweet story of the love of a native girl and a young American engineer comes in here as Elena nearly succeeds in coming in between them. One man is killed in a duel for her, her husband kills himself and then she takes another man away and ruins his career. She receives her just dues in the outcome, however, for she sinks to the lowest level possible. Blasco does not show any particular reaction to marriage conditions, his condemnation is rather of the individual woman. Elena he compares to the Helen of old, who brought war among men in a far-away corner of the globe. He gives her the benefit of the doubt, however, as he says, "Had this woman been really bad, fully conscious of her perversity? Had she been simply hungry for the pleasures of life, and ambitious, making her way over the fallen bodies of others without knowing what she was treading under foot?"

El lujo relates an encounter with a prostitute so new at the game that she showed no hesitancy in telling her life history. She had left the farm home of her parents, deceived by a young fellow of higher social position. And when he deserted her

she found that house in the city because even there she found greater comforts than on the little farm. It is a condemnation of an artificial society that makes a woman sell her body for the meager necessities of life.

In La Catedral he shows a girl who was deceived by a man of higher social position, and caused to sink to the lowest depths possible to a woman. In La bodega, Luis Dupont, scion of the wealthy family of the community dishonors the daughter of one of his father's employees.

The final opinion is then that Dicenta devotes as much discussion to the question of the relationship of the sexes as Blasco devotes to the agrarian and religious questions. Dicenta is more emotional and impassioned, while Blasco reasons and presents logically constructed arguments.

While Blasco is occupied with individual cases, Dicenta is concerned with the problem in its larger aspect as it affects society as a whole.

RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS.

There is no denying the fact that the Church is one of the most powerful influences in Spain today. Monarchy and the Church are everything to the Spanish people. Blasco makes the statement that by their faith they are slaves bound by a moral chain that no revolution can break. After generations and generations of domination the Spanish spirit has been broken. Poverty is exalted as the perfect state, and they blindly follow the teachings of the priest whose weapons are fear and superstition, and by use of these goad them to any sacrifice to attain Heaven. The Inquisition still lives in Spain, says Blasco, for the masses are in constant unrest because of the uncertainty of salvation.

We must realize that any reformer exaggerates the seriousness of the situation, enlarges upon the initial idea to make more effective his propaganda. Thus, many of Blasco's statements must be taken with a grain of salt and the understanding that the past two decades have seen a great many steps in advance. The late World War has

wrought many changes and given the people a more scientific point of view.

The Church is the very personification of organization; it has its representatives in every village and hamlet. There is today one priest to every thirty inhabitants. In the sixteenth century, when the domination of the Church was at its height, there were in Spain eleven thousand convents, more than one hundred thousand monks, forty thousand nuns, one hundred seventy eight thousand priests and innumerable servants. Due to the expulsion of the Moors and the Jews, the Inquisition, foreign wars, emigration to America, poor hygiene, and non-cultivation of the fields, the population was decreased from thirty million to seven million in less than two hundred years. As a consequence governmental revenues fell to fourteen million dollars, while those of the Church rose to eight millions.

The sixteenth century Church, owning more than one-half of the wealth in Spain, enjoyed this vast fortune without endeavoring to improve the conditions of the people and the country. The priests had no time to cultivate the lands; they

were too busy with meditations to make themselves self-supporting. Century after century of this made the Church poorer and poorer until now the priests, for a living, sell tourist-tickets of admission to the cathedrals as though they were bull-rings or circuses. (1). It is quite time that the Spanish people were realizing that all the national wealth placed in churches and convents does not develop paying industries, to be relied upon in times of economic stress. Spanish railways are few and bad, the work of foreigners and owned by them. Her most important industries belong to foreign capital. Less than one-third of the agricultural land is actually cultivated. Blasco tries to arouse the people to action by saying, "Hay piedra para iglesias y nuevos conventos, nunca para diques y pantanos".

All peoples have passed through a similar evolution. First government is by the sword, then by faith, and finally by science. Spain has passed through periods of being governed by warriors and by priests, but has stopped short on the point of embracing science, said Blasco in 1903. Revolu-

(1). La Catedral, Valencia, p. 97.

tions are prevalent all over Europe, but Spain has not the strength or desire to revolt. Three centuries of intolerance and oppression have made of Spain a most indifferent nation.

There was a time when opposition to this dominance was a thing unknown, but along with a bit more progressive view on a variety of subjects has come openly stated criticism and objection to clerical policies.

Havelock Ellis writes, in contrast to Blasco's radical summary of the situation, "It is a little difficult to define precisely where Spain stands today in relation to this question of religious communities. In one direction there is clearly, among both men and women, a large amount of faith, of religious observance, even of passionate devotion, and sometimes also of intolerant bigotry, the whole supported by a mass of superb tradition, of magnificent architecture and ritual, of ecclesiastical organization and wealth, today unsurpassed in any country. But in another direction we have the subtly penetrating influence of Liberalism and Republicanism and Anarchism, of the revolt

against the ancient and inert forces which are believed to be impeding the advance of Spain.(1).

Dicenta has said little about the Church as an institution. He mentioned it only occasionally. His particular grievance was against the monasteries and such religious communities rather than the Church as a whole. On the other hand Blasco objected to several phases of the policies of the Church, and especially its despotism.

In Piedra a Piedra he said: "Veía todo esto; veía cómo por obra de los monasterios y fundaciones religiosas, que se extendieron por España como úlceras de piedra, fuémos perdiendo crédito, grandeza, civilización y prestigio para convertimos en estorbo y rúmorea del progreso europeo."

He becomes more fervent yet and in his hope that Spain is on the threshold of release he fears a return of the masses to the same, unthinking dependence, and he pleads: ¡El pasado, la tiranía monástica! ¡Que no vuelvan, que no acaben de volver, mejor dicho, porque su vuelta sería el toque mortuario de la nacionalidad española!" (2)

(1) Havelock Ellis, The Soul of Spain, Houghton Mifflin, 1915, pp. 396 ff.

(2) De Piedra a Piedra , p. 85

The convents are in Spain the depositing place for resources, of all kinds. The people support these religious communities, providing all the necessities and many luxuries. Dicenta resents this arrangement of things and says: "Los viajeros dan al convento sus limosnas, el bosque su leña, el monte su caza, los árboles sus frutas y la atmósfera sus efluvios de energía y salud. Todos son allí contribuyentes, todos pagan algo al convento. El convento no paga, en cambio, nada. Disfruta gratis, sin partirlos con el Erario, los rendimientos que la enorme finca produce, y es en ella señor absoluto." (1)

Characteristic of his method of approach to all problems is Blasco's attack on the Church. He is less wary and cautious than Dicenta. Ellis has aptly said of Blasco, "Rough, vigorous, not always even grammatical, sometimes crudely naturalistic, sometimes breaking into impassioned lyricism, always an uncompromising revolutionist, aggressive and combative, ardently concerned with social problems, and a faithful painter of the common people whose life he knows so well." (2)

(1) De Piedra a Piedra, p. 127

(2) Havelock Ellis, The Soul of Spain, p. 397

Blasco does not mince words in the expression of his idea of certain abuses existing in the Church in Spain. Perhaps the greatest of his propaganda novels is La Catedral, which gives his conception of those abuses. He characterizes the Spanish Church of today as, "the most absolute power on earth; in no imperial institution is despotism so cruel as in the Church!"(1). He says further, "a greater and more complete despotism no tyrant ever imagined than that exercised by the Church".(2). The title of this novel has been translated in English as In the Shadow of the Cathedral, and in that shadow live only automats, scandalized at a new idea and incapable of free and independent thought. (3). Gabriel Luna, the socialistic reformer, serves to bring into contact the radical, twentieth century world, and the sixteenth century Church.

The Lunas had lived for many centuries in the cathedral of Toledo, the oldest of the countless Spanish cathedrals. As a child Gabriel was very promising and his father dies happy in the thought that his boy would some day hold a promi-

(1). La Catedral, Valencia, 1918, p. 227.

(2). Id. p. 233.

(3). Id. p. 200-201.

nent place in the Church. As a child he had been taught that human progress was a lie, and that the only real purpose of life was to know God and the greatness of his power. But Gabriel was blessed with an inquisitive nature and when he became concerned with the way and the wherefore of the world he turned from the narrow walls of the Church to a freer and more independent life. The modern world was to him a place of marvelous achievement, in view of his early life in the atmosphere of the Cathedral. He saw how the masses were held in subjection, economically, by the more fortunate! Money-mad people about him, in their greed, forgot the Ten Commandments that he had never been allowed to forget. He realized the injustice of the existing social organization, and began to preach the doctrines of reform. A youth of remarkable possibilities, educated for the clergy, he turned to the other extreme and became a radical. He became such a revolutionist that he was a wanderer, a man without a home, always barely escaping imprisonment. His health broken by prison confinement, he returned to the cathedral in Toledo to spend his remaining days peacefully there with his brother who had never left the service of the

Church. Now the small world within the walls of the the Cathedral listened avidly to Gabriel's adventures in the world outside. He endeavored to preach to them his revolutionary ideas, and in their simplicity, they accepted them literally. In conclusion, three of his rebellious followers, determined to secure their part of the worldly goods which had been denied them, come to rob an especially wealthy Madonna, murder Gabriel who tries to remonstrate, steal the jewels and escape. The irony of the event is terrible.

The idea is to point out the dangers of preaching revolutionary doctrines to ignorant people, dominated for centuries by a tyrannical institution. The only reward reaped by Gabriel was a broken life and untimate violent death. He tried to reason with his assassins who argued force as the only means of gaining their rights, telling them that they only perpetuated evil by using the same method of robbery that had been used against them. He was opposed to a selfish retribution which could do no lasting good for the clergy as a whole.

The contrast between the Church which was

still in a sixteenth century period of development and the actual twentieth century world is clearly drawn in the characters of Gabriel and his brother Sebastian. To Sebastian the world has always been and will always be the same. In his creed the only thing of importance was to live a Christian life, with a certainty that the other life would be a far better one. On the other hand Gabriel saw the world being made anew. His creed was a broad one, including brotherly love and a practical Christianity to make this world a better place for all. The servants of the Cathedral still lived in fear of the Inquisition and knew only poverty and want. They lived in superstitious terror of their superiors, realizing the injustice of their condition but not daring to express their thoughts. Gabriel had seen poverty in the outside world; but those poverty-stricken masses were not terrorized by their superiors. A piteous picture, indeed, is that of the baby of the shoemaker, which starved to death at its starving mother's breast. The parents were too afraid and too ignorant to do anything, and worse, they were quite helpless in the face of the existing order of things.

On the other hand, the poor of the world outside were able to think and act on their own initiative, taking the best means in their power to right the wrongs done them.

In comparison with nine million dollars yearly for education, two million dollars for the army, and one million to aid the unfortunate, the three hundred million dollars drawn by the Church from the state and country seems enormous. But Blasco writes that the clergy is always complaining of poverty. (1). The vast sums paid to the Church, however, go to the aristocracy of the Church, while the poor priests receive only seven dollars a month. The menials who perform all of the domestic drudgery are underpaid, and denied the necessities of life, huddled together in unsanitary housing conditions. They die miserable deaths in a wealthy, imperial institution unequalled for its despotism. (2).

Gabriel characterizes Catholicism in the same words used by Dicenta, a giant tumor grown on the epidermis of Spain. He accused it of absorbing the best of the nation.

Los de abajo contains more references to

(1). La Catedral, Valencia, 1918, pp. 238-39.

(2). Id. p. 123.

(3).

religion and Christianity than any other of Dicenta's works. He here objects to the celibacy of the churchmen, for he finds priests human beings who may have taken the vows without due consideration. Then, too, they must exercise superhuman will power in suppressing their natural emotions. "Aquel hombre que, libre de votos religiosos, hubiera sido como otros muchos de su especie, amante feliz, libertino acaso, pero libertino a plena luz, se encontró obligado a contenerse, a perseguir en la sombra la satisfacción de sus apetitos." (1).

Dicenta calls the priests hypocritical and accuses them of favoring the upper classes rather than the oppressed. He sits at the foot of a dead tree and recalls what the conditions of a hundred years before might have been, and discovers that little progress has been made. The priests still rule and the common people have not the right to think.

Blasco comes closer to Dicenta's idea of the religious question in El intruso than elsewhere. (2). Again he is concerned with the conflict of the old Spain with the new. But here he attacks, in particular, the order of the Jesuits. He sets his

(1). Los de abajo, p. 166.

(2). El intruso, Valencia, 1916.

action in Bilbao, capital of Viscaya. Bilbao is a seaport town that owes its prosperity to its iron mines, known from earliest times, but worked only since the latter part of the nineteenth century. To begin, Blasco says, "there is no spot of prosperity or wealth on the map of Spain that the Jesuits have not occupied. In the poorer parts of Spain these followers of Loyola are unknown. Where they appear, there can be no possible doubt there is wealth"(1). Hence, the Jesuits hastened at once to take possession of Bilbao. They built their churches and university and began a systematic process of romanization. The plot is less definite than usual in Blasco's work. Sánchez Morueta has rapidly acquired wealth in the mining business, and he soon resents the intrusion of the Jesuits. Although he is at first so very bitter he succumbs and becomes a member of the order. His wife is a very typical Jesuit product. She ignores her husband as a worldly evil and neglects her family to perform those duties exacted of her by the priest; her daughter is not allowed to associate with those who do not live according to the teachings of the Jesuit order. Doctor Aresti, the

(1). El intruso, p. 129.

cousin of Morueta, serves to preach propaganda. He is a man who devotes his life to lightening the suffering of the poor, scorning social position to cast his lot in the mines. He toils for others in contrast with the selfish Morueta who works only for himself. The Doctor is a visionary who dreams of a day when the petty gods of material things which have kept men in bondage for centuries shall disappear; a day of redemption, social justice is his ideal. Science is the means.

Blasco believes that universal theory that education is the best means of progress; but he fears that Spain has been grounded too firmly in her traditional setting to effect those needed reforms in the slow process of popular education; a sudden and cataclysmic revolution is necessary to arouse Spain, but here as in La bodega (1) the revolution fails of its purpose. He writes, "Social unrest has only one solution; to change the organization of the world and to proclaim social justice as the only law, suppressing charity which is no more than hypocrisy which draws the mask of benevolence over the cruelties of the present. (2). He bemoans the priest-ridden society which by maintaining

(1). La bodega, p. 201.

(2). Id. p. 158.

in Spain of today the Church of centuries ago has been partially responsible for keeping her in the ranks of the second rate nations of Europe. The exaltation of Catholicism develops a society of automations. It trains those over whom it can gain a hold, and teaches the rest to be followers. The hold of the Jesuits is so powerful that the people submissively say, "Dominate us, make of us what you will and give us Heaven in exchange". (1).

Before the priests came to Bilbao there was less ore brought forth, but that little belonged to the people. Then the Jesuits came in swarms and settled down. The housing situation was a problem which affected the health and morals of the community, but the laborers of Bilbao were forced by a tyrannical religion to build luxurious homes for the numerous priesthood, while they themselves merely existed the best they could in miserable, unsanitary huts. The priest-burdened Church, to support her countless servants, exploited the people until only the very wealthy could afford to attend services.

(1). El intruso, p. 116.

The privileged say that God is Justice, and so mask their exploitation of the lesser ones. So did the Jesuits assuage the cries of the masses. But Blasco asks, why are not the unfortunates not indignant against a religion which closes justice to them here below? Why wait for the promised relief, doing nothing? They must act if they would be relieved. They should demand a fair division of the profits.

Doctor Aresti expresses a truth clearly when he says, "In other countries these ill-gotten fortunes are used in part for the public good; for universities or libraries. Every wealthy man leaves something to help those whom during his lifetime he has exploited,--but in Spain the wealthy keep their wealth or if they feel a desire to perpetuate their name they build a convent or a chapel. If a revolution does not come Spain will be like Paraguay of old, without knowing it, everybody will work for the Jesuits. (1).

Every Spaniard is in his soul an inquisitor. He goes on to prove it by calling to the reader's attention how easily the public peace is disturbed before the slightest advancement. The moderniza-

(1). El intruso, pp. 159-60.

tion of Spain has been but superficial. Elsewhere the progress from Faith to Reason was accomplished gradually. But violent measures must be taken, thinks Blasco, to bring Spain, retarded four centuries, to the actuality of the twentieth century. Intolerant education is a Spanish inheritance which has held them back and the evil cannot be overcome in a few years.

El intruso was written for the purpose of bringing the people to realize that an institution whose teachings keep its subjects in degradation, not trying to alleviate poverty and want, should be discarded in the new program of reconstruction and reform.

A closely related subject is that of the conflict between Jew and Gentile. The racial antagonism dates so far back that it would be difficult to trace the source. At any rate it is a universal and thoroughly grounded hatred. Dicenta does not mention it, but Blasco has two novels on the theme, one short one, Luna Benamor, (1). and one of his regional novels, Los muertos mandan. (2).

(1). Luna Benamor, Valencia, n.d.

(2). Los muertos mandan, Valencia, 1914.

Luna Benamor is chiefly the story of the love of a Gentile man for a Jewess. Luis Aguirre is sent on a diplomatic appointment, but stops enroute at Gibraltar where he meets the lovely Luna Benamor. He delays there suing for the heart and hand of the girl. The heart is easily won, but the hand, - a different tale. Her Jewish fiancé returned hastily, she was ordered to break off all relations with Aguirre, who left for his consular post with a heavy heart.

The Jews in Gibraltar cannot forget the expulsion from Spain. The old Jew, Samuel Aboab remembers it, "Habían sufrido mucho, el temor de la expulsión estaba aún en sus huesos y en su sangre, después de cuatro siglos. ¿Quién podía saber lo que ocurriría durante la noche? ¿Quién podía darle la seguridad de que no despertaría entre cadenas para ser conducido a un puerto como una bestia? Así habían acabado sus antepasados españoles, teniendo que refugiarse en Marruecos, donde una rama de la familia se trasladó a Gibraltar al apoderarse los ingleses de la plaza." (1)

The barrier between Jew and Gentile found expression in Luna's conclusions, "Era hebrea y seguiría fiel a su raza. No iría a perderse aislada é infructífera entre gentes extrañas que

(1) Luan Benamor, p. 40

odiaban al judío por un instinto ancestral. Sentíase sin fuerzas para sufrir odios y recelos en aquel mundo enemigo al que pretendía arrastrarla el amor, mundo del que sólo habían salido tormentos é insultos para su raza. Quería ser fiel a su pueblo, continuar la marcha defensiva que venían realizando los suyos a través de siglos y persecuciones."(1)

The action of Los muertos mandan centers about the class feeling between Jews and Gentiles, although the basic idea is that the living are dominated by the spiritual heritage of the dead. The scene is laid in the peaceful, rustic island of Mallorca in the Balearic islands. (2). Jaime Febrer, last scion of a patriarchal family, has a heritage of a distinguished name, and an impractical education. He sees no other remedy but to marry a wealthy Jewess. But the traditions intervene and he abandons the idea. But he still has a castle in Iviza (3) to which he retires. He has nothing to do but court one of the native girls, Margarida. Her parents object, but he is more ardent. He acquires some money and is about to leave for Mallorca again when he is attacked and wounded seriously. He is

(1). Luna Benamor, p. 97-98.

(2). Balearic islands are off the coast of Valencia in the Mediterranean.

(3). One of the Balearic islands.

healed by the uncle of the girl and all ends happily.

Blasco is not here preaching propaganda on the subject. He merely brings out graphically the age-old hatred of Jew for Gentile and vice-versa.

His greatest concern is the tyranny of the Church over the masses, and the pitifully degrading effect of that oppression. We must bear in mind that Blasco was extreme in his views, much more so than Dicenta, but that this very forcefulness made his works masterpieces of propaganda literature.

ALCOHOLISM, GAMBLING AND THE BULLFIGHT.

This being one phase of the general social problem it is discussed by both of these authors who concern themselves with society in general.

From what we know of his life, Dicenta should be qualified by personal experience to write on the subject. He has little to say about it, possibly for that reason, but he cannot entirely avoid it. In one passage he would seem to be in sympathy with habitual drunkenness for he says that men who drink occasionally do more harm than those who are quite accustomed to it. "Tengo observado que en estas solemnidades casi todas las personas formales que ponen como un trapo a quienes abusan del vino, se emborrachan de un modo escandaloso y cometen en un solo día más inconveniencias y disparates de los cometidos en un año por una curda habitual". (1)

In a passage in De la batalla (2) he describes one drunkard as follows: "--un borracho que despierta y guiña los ojos para acostumbrarse a la luz: y desentumece su lengua con chasquido ronco, y se

(1). Paraíso perdido, p. 116.

(2). De la batalla, p. 30.

pasa la mano por la frente para alejar de ella la neblina embrutecedora del alcohol". In La epopeya de un presidiario Pedro, a normally fine and upright fellow kills a companion unintentionally while under the influence of liquor.(1). In Idos y muertos (2) he tells of the suicide of a dear friend of his who killed himself by weakly submitting to his love of liquor. "Entregándose al envenamiento diario del alcohol y al diario cultivo de la ociosidad, destruyó su organismo, mató su porvenir, amortiguó su inspiración". He speaks of the poor, laboring people whose only pleasure is in drinking. La Grefiuda in Daniel says, El aguardiente es mi recurso y gano pocas perras pa beber el que necesito". The effect is degrading, to say the least.

Blasco devoted an entire novel, his third propaganda novel, La bodega, to the question of the detrimental effect of alcohol. The scene is laid in Jerez, the center of the wine industry and known universally for its famous sherry-wines. The Dupont family, owner of an immense wine factory, forms the nucleus of the plot. Fermín Montenegro is manager of one of the Dupont estates. Rafael, also

(1). De la batalla, p. 138.

(2). Idos y muertos, p. 110.

an employee of the Duponts, is betrothed to Fermín's daughter, María de la Luz, who is dishonored by Luis Dupont in a drunken revel. Her brother tries to secure redress from him and his brother Pablo, but fails, slays Luis and flees to America. Shortly afterward Rafael and María de la Luz are married and follow to America.

All of the tragedies that occur in La bodega are the result of the sparkling Jerez wine, from the death of the little gypsy girl in a drunken brawl, to the murder of Luis Dupont. The author brings out the poisonous, deadening influence of alcohol as the traces are transmitted from generation to generation. It so often happens in that region that as intelligent men reach their majority they fall victims to the regional epidemic. Instead of being leaders of men they become drunken sots. Their brains function only at the urge of alcohol. And Blasco feels the need of eliminating this evil, which lowers men's potentialities, for he resents the detrimental influence on the more gifted. But Spain especially needs all her capable men to keep her abreast of the times. Salvatierra, the reformer, says, "El vino! Ese es el mayor enemigo de este país; mata las energías, crea engañosas

esperanzas, acaba con la vida prematualmente; todo lo destruye; hasta el amor". (1).

Blasco sees Jerez as a city of millionaires, surrounded by a vast horde of beggars. He paints a brilliantly realistic picture of the lives of those drones. The workers are practically slaves, bound by chains of their own forging, the wine. They work themselves to death for a miserable pittance and starvation rations. They have only bread and garlic stew; their home an uninhabitable hut. And they drink with all the eagerness of anemics the brilliant blood of the land, which eases the pangs of hunger and brightens life for a moment. Their worst enemy, and the cause of their degradation is the result of their own labor. Insufficient food and slavish work have so dulled these unslaved people that they have become satisfied with their lot. Then appears again Blasco's idea that the Church's policy of inculcating into the masses the theory of the virtue of submission to authority has caused incalculable harm by teaching humility and resignation to injustice. (2)

The revolt to secure a more just distribution

(1). La bodega, p. 202.

(2). Id. pp. 203, 207.

of the fruits of their labor failed for want of of co-operation and leadership Brutalized and deadened by indulgence in the wine, the wretched workmen were too ignorant and too inert to grasp the idea of uplift when it was brought before them. Blasco says, (1) Aquella tierra era la del vino, y Salvatierra maldecía la influencia que ejercía sobre la gente el veneno alcohólico, transmitiéndose de generación en generación. La bodega era la moderna fortaleza feudal que mantenía a las masas en la servidumbre y la abyección. Los entusiasmos, los crímenes, la alegría, los amores, todo era producto del vino, como si aquel pueblo que aprendía a beber apenas soltaba el pecho de la madre y contaba las horas del día por el número de copas, careciese de pasiones y afectos, y fuera incapaz de moverse y sentir por propio impulso, necesitando para todos sus actos el resort de la bebida."

Usually closely allied with drink are the questions of gambling and the bullfight. Chapman says that the bull fight and the lottery are two of the causes for the control of the aristocracy. Such control is one of the draw-backs to social progress. He speaks of the lottery as the national disease and the bullfight is, he says, too emotional

(1) La bodega, p. 201

a sport for the best interests of the people(1).

Little is said by either Dicenta or Blasco about the lottery, but Blasco has more novels wherein gambling is shown as one of the diversions of the wealthy. In Los enemigos de la mujer he presents a picture of the luxurious life of millionaires whose chief diversion is roulette at Monte Carlo. Novoa says, if there are probabilities of winning, these probabilities are in proportion to the wealth of the gamblers. A poor gambler has less chance of winning than one who has capital at his disposal. We are the under dogs and were born to be victims. Gambling is an image of life; the strong triumph over the weak. Trying to win a great fortune with small capital is equivalent to wanting to lose that capital.

Dicenta says little of the bull fight, but that little he expresses in no uncertain phraseology, "No defiende las corridas de toros; tampoco las censuro. Creo que hoy por hoy, y gracias a lo mucho que les falta para estar completamente educados necesitan los hombres de un espectáculo brutal, que sea a manera de válvula por donde se escape y satisfaga la cantidad de fiera que hay

(1). Charles Edward Chapman, History of Spain,
McMillan, 1918, p. 523.

en todo individuo. Prueba de ello es que cada pueblo tiene su diversión barbara; y yo, francamente, entre ver dos hombres riñendo a puñetazo limpio, dos gallos picoteándose, un gimnasta haciendo oposiciones a cadáver desde un trapecio, o ver a un torero burlando con su habilidad las embestidas de una fiera, prefiero lo último; resulta más artístico. Claro que si los caballos supiesen escribir, acudirían a la ley de imprenta para rectificar esta opinión. Ellos constituyen con sus agonizares crueles la nota triste y repugnante de la fiesta española".(1).

Blasco speaks at greater length of the bull-fight, even devoting an entire novel to propaganda against it as a national industry for a nation which is in dire need of industrial and educational reorganization. His mind set in one of its twists is amusing, for it reminds one of a quarrelsome person who criticises severely someone close to his affections, but turns to fight to the death for that person should another dare to censure. He strenuously objects to Spain's toleration of such barbarous sport, yet is indignant that foreigners look upon Spain as a corrupt nation on account of it. He censures useless horse

(1), Traperías, p. 69.

races in which he says more men are killed than
 in bull fights; fox hunting, in which small
 animals are hunted and torn to pieces by dogs; games
 of modern sport in which the players come off the
 field with broken legs, fractured skulls and
 smashed noses; against the duel whose sole cause
 is usually a desire for publicity; and he might
 well add the American prize fight. (1).

Blasco devotes several pages to a discussion
 of the cause and evolution of the bull fight.(2).
 He characterizes it as the successor to the Auto de
fe. Once the Inquisition furnished the great nation-
 al sport, but it had its day. When the people
 became ashamed of burning men alive and there was
 no more new territory to conquer, the Spanish
 people turned to the bull fight as a safety valve
 for the ferocity of the crowds in the clamor for
 diversion. The Spanish people here were really
 taking a step forward in the development of
 public entertainment as they progress from spectacles
 of human agony to the killing of poor, emaciated
 horses. So in the middle of the eighteenth
 century, as the Inquisition waned the bull fight

(1). sangre y arena, p. 241-42.

(2). Id. p. 238-41.

began to flourish. They built permanent plazas, and professional groups of fighters were formed and rules made for the regulation of the sport. Bull fighting became a profession and was democratized. At one time knights killed bulls only in celebration of some special event, such as the marriage of the king or dedication of a chapel, but later knights were superseded by the plebeian professional. Men who would have been soldiers or colonizers of the new world one hundred years earlier now became toreros. The people finding their one time amusement, the Auto de fe, followed by the burning of men, being closed to them turned enthusiastically to the new diversion, and it became more popular than the Inquisition had ever been.

The plot of Sangre y arena is easily summarized. The basic theme is the life of Gallardo, who from a poor, half-starved boy rose to fame as one of the most popular toreros of his day, and fell again into oblivion when he was carried from the arena, dying, to the shouts of the mob for more victims. It is a vivid picture of the psychology of the bull fighter, his profession and his popularity. He represents the tragedy of a man whose life

was spent for the public, the crowds enthralled by his dare-devilry, howl for more when their idol of an hour before has just given his life for them. Gallardo's life and the temporary glory he has attained are at the mercy of two beasts, one in the ring and the other in the amphitheater, "¡Pobre toro! Pobre espada! De pronto, el circo rumoroso lanzó un alarido saludando la continuación del espectáculo. El nacional cerró los ojos y apretó los puños. Rugía la fiera; la verdadera; la única". (1).

Blasco speaks of it as 'la gran industria nacional', and ridicules his fellow-countrymen for carrying it to such an extreme. He says that when a pastime reaches such an extent that the people of the country feel more pride in it than in industrial reorganization and in the school system, then they should seek another pastime. Blasco is trying to create a feeling against a condition which permits thousands of dollars to be spent annually on the bull fighting industry, when the country needs millions of dollars for industrial and social reorganization.

(1). Sangre y arena, p. 374.

But love for the spectacular is so much a part of the Spanish temperament that the masses are far more interested in seeing a bull fight than in marking the ballot which might give them a chance to rise out of their slavery. On election day people are on the streets in groups. He says, "Había en las calles grandes grupos discutiendo con apasionamiento; pero sólo hablaban de toros. ¡Qué gentes! --La ciudad parecía ignorar la existencia de las elecciones". (1).

He laments so calloused an attitude in the common people that they can be roused only by the call of the bull fight.

Blasco says that the Spanish people speak proudly of their bulls, as if the splendor of those animals they raise for the bull ring make them superior to other nations. "Y había en sus gozosas exclamaciones una expresión de orgullo nacional, como si el arrogante valor de la fiera española significase igualmente la superioridad de la tierra y de la raza sobre el resto del mundo". (2).

He deals a sarcastic blow to the modern society whose idea of diversions is a thing so barbarous as the bull fight. The poor, worn out

(1). Sangre y arena, p. 277.

(2). Id. p. 151.

horses exploited all their lives are brought after years of continual labor to the final exploitation,-- the bull ring. These skeletons of old, broken down and diseased animals are torn to pieces brutally to amuse a civilized public. (1).

Blasco has demonstrated through the life of Gallardo how a man of strong potentialities wastes his life in the bull ring; and Spain is in need of all of her strong men to change the land of traditional mañana into a land where the mañana is one of outlook for future accomplishments.

(1). Sangre y arena, p. 325.

OTHER SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC QUESTIONS.

Two rather closely allied phases of the economic question are those of mining and the factory. Dicenta is particularly interested in these aspects of industrial life. Many workers are employed in the coal mines in Spain. The injustice done to them may be compared with the treatment of the farm laborers. Much of the injustice lies in the attitude of capital toward the labor. In Crónicas we have a good summary. Huillez discovered coal and began working in the mines because he had no money to undertake a mining enterprise. This man with a splendid mind did manual labor that any mediocre person could do, and he never succeeded in acquiring a fortune because he was always exploited by the capitalists. Thus is the way of the world; the rich do no work and amass constantly greater fortunes, while the poor give their strength and health. The results of life in the mines are disastrous. The energy of the man and the strength of the youth are alike spent in those dark passages. The victims become anemic because the dust prevents

proper respiration. This weakened condition is transmitted from generation to generation. Is this inequality just? Did nature intend it to be so? "¡Ahí va eso! Trabajadlo y disfrutadlo equitativamente; pero sucedió todo lo contrario. Los chicos más fuertes cogieron por el cogote los más débiles y les gritaron, ¡Eh! Los trabajos para vosotros y para nosotros los beneficios! ¡Obedecéis o apretamos! Y los débiles se pusieron a la faena y los fuertes al acaparamiento y la madre naturaleza fué estafada una vez más." (1)

El grisú tells the story of an explosion through the fault of an inexperienced workman who set his lantern too near the mouth of a mine where the gas was escaping. Fifty-three workers were killed, and their families, not being able to support themselves were forced to rely on charity. It was not the fault of the workman because he had been forced to work at a task of which he knew nothing in order to live and keep his family from absolute poverty. (2)

Dicenta made it a point to visit various regions where mining was going on. He speaks of the salt and lead miners in Espumas y plomo. The drying process used on the salt creates a most

(1) Crónicas, p.68-70

(2) Los de abajo, p.219

unfavorable condition for the miners. In Montones de sal he tells something of it, "Los séres, in-clasificables por la distancia, eran jornaleros que trabajaban en un infierno al aire libre; infierno que para mayor escarnio y burla de los miserables obreros habían construido el cielo con rayos asesinos entonces, de su lumbre fecundadora; el homérico banquete, codicioso tráfico, explotación de hombres, realizado por la avaricia y el ansia de oro de otros hombres,-----Pierden la salud porque no es trabajo sino martirio inicuo el que padecen bajo aquella atmósfera de fuego, trajinando sin descanso horas y horas para que el buque no retrase su marcha y el mercader no pierda un segundo en las urgencias de su tráfico." (1) Those men work like beasts of burden rather than like men.

His comparison of the lead mines likens them to the Inquisition rather than to the infernal regions. The health of the lead miners suffers even more than that of the coal miners. In Lluvia de plomo he says, "matar siempre; tal es el destino del plomo. Parece congénito en este mineral el

(1) Espumas y plomo, p. 27-28

asesinato. Dentro de la mina, en estado de salvaje, se guarece con las defensas de un atmósfera irrespirable, para desgarrar las carnes o aplastar los huesos del obrero; en el fondo del horno fundidor vuélvese hoguera que desprende gases mortíferas y llamas destructoras; en las cámaras de condensación se hace veneno; en la fábrica se vuelve proyectil; en el desplate mismo, cuando suda la plata, parece sudarla con el objeto exclusivo de que se esparza por el mundo pronta a satisfacer codicias, a mercar conciencias y consentir explotaciones, y favorecer iniquidades." (1) After working in these mines men are merely "human residue of exploitation". (2) The attitude of the owners toward the miners is one of the worst features of all. A mine owner is speaking and says, "El obrero se queja sin razón. El trabajo de hornos y cámaras no es tan malo como ellos dicen. Aquí los hombres, con pocas precauciones, no tienen que temer nada por su salud. Esto no es tan malo, no es tan malo; de veras." (3) A second later a miserable, sickly dog passes by and he inconsistently answers a comment upon the

(1) Espumas y plomo, p. 109

(2) Id., p. 114

(3) Id., p. 119

animal by saying, "¡Vaya unperro! Vivirá poco. Perro que anda por estos sitios no dura un año."(1)

The most abject victims of the mining industry, however, are those whose lives are spent in mining quicksilver. El modorro describes just such a victim. "Cuando bajó a la mina por primera vez era un individuo fuerte y ágil. Sus carnes vivificadas por el sol, fortalecidas por el aire libre de los campos, tenían resistencia y salud; sus huesos crujían con poderoso crujimiento en el engrase de sus articulaciones, su medula se erguía recta y firme para sostener una cabeza varonil, donde brillaban los ojos con el resplandor de la juventud y sonreía la boca enseñando la dentadura. Cuando salió por última vez de la mina, era un frasco de mercurio más, un cacho de mineral vivo, útil aún para producir ganancias a sus explotadores, si estos no vacilaban en entregarse a una prensa destiladora. Salud, energía, músculos potentes, osamenta sólida, medula pronta a erguirse con arrogancia varonil, todo fué deshecho por la mina. El mercurio, penetrando en los pulmones del minero y en su sangre con el aire, fué e'

(1) Espumas y plomo, p. 120

apoderándose poco a poco de él, destruyéndolo todo, agelitandolo, convirtiéndole en masa informe y temblorosa, en sapo de azogue, hasta que un día terminada su labor destructora y satisfecho totalmente de ella, le dejó caer sobre la jaula y devolvió a la superficie de la tierra el desperdicio humano que se acercaba hacia nosotros arrastrándose como un reptil y jadeado como una bestia herida,"(1)

Dicenta describes the man in a most realistic manner "Miserable imagen la que nos miraba con sus ojos sin brillo y nos sonreía con su boca sin dientes! La carne rebujada en un chaquetón y unos pantalones, no debía ser carne, sino una gelatina de hombre. Tan continuo, tan acentuado, tan completo era su temblor, que no podía tener músculos que le afianzaran ni huesos que le fortalecieran, ni médula que le sirviera de puntal. Pasta, hecha con linfa, sangre y filamentos nerviosos, machacados, era, indudablemente aquel tronco informe y convulso-- aquel hombre era víctima de la mina, un contribuyente del mercurio que platea los criaderos de Almadén. La miseria, las urgencias del mendrugo

(1) Los de abajo, p. 209-210

diario le empujaron en la galería, enfrontándole con la vita del azogue y poniéndole una piqueta o un barreno en las manos."(1) For his sacrifice he now receives twenty-four pesetas a month, while the state sells each flask of mercury, of which he produced thousands, for three hundred pesetas.

Dicenta tells again in Daniel of the miners, their lives and their work. The mine and the foundry are closely allied. The work in the mines affects the mental attitude of the workers quite as much as it does their health. Because they cannot satisfy their most modest ambitions they lose hope and self-respect. What little money they get goes for liquor to ease the pangs of thwarted desires. The foundry work causes arsenic poisoning and its consequent weakening effects upon the body, lowering resistance to such an extent that all exposure is hazardous. It is well to relate here the plot of Daniel, which carries to a conclusion the social theories suggested by Juan José. Daniel, the father of two sons and a daughter is a miner. His daughter is dishonored by Luis, his employer.

(1). Los de abajo, p. 207.

One son is a member of the Civil Guard, while the other, Pablo, is a miner, but an idealist and dreamer. Pablo loves Cesárea whose husband has been killed in a strike. They are both anxious to help their co-workers, but their great difficulty is in making the masses see the advantages of an organized revolt. Finally wages are lowered again and a strike is declared. Gradually the strikers weaken and want to return to work, for discomfort has made cowards of them. Daniel, one of the older generation is not willing to revolt against his master at any time and so becomes rebellious toward his son, the leader. When, a few days later, Daniel sees the strikers destroying his tools so that the new men cannot work he turns against his own associates. Troops are called; Daniel sees his own sons fighting against each other. Both are killed, and Daniel, ill from shock and grief is taken to the hospital. As he recovers his attitude changes and he bitterly hates his once respected superiors. At last he secures his revenge by letting a party of his enemies fall to the bottom of an elevator shaft. The observer may say that this play is

melodramatic and over-drawn, but Daniel does not represent one man, nor even one generation. He is centuries of oppression and many people. His misfortunes are those of many lives. When considered from the broader view point the cruelty and strength and indifference of the controlling classes are not exaggerated. It is the privilege of the artist to condense and concentrate his picture. This is not exaggeration, but art.(1).

The point is often made by Dicenta that the capitalist takes advantage of the worker, in an economic sense as well as otherwise. Aurora is a girl's own story. She was forced to support herself from childhood by working in a factory. "¡La fábrica! ¡Maldita sea! ¡Cuánto la odio! En ella quedaron los dos únicos regalos buenos que Dios me hizo; mi niñez y mi honra!" She was only fourteen years old and her master took advantage of her because she was innocent and obedient to him. "¡Y aquel hombre! ¡Aquel hombre! Bien se aprovechó de mi ignorancia! Era el amo! ¡El amo! El que desde pequeña mandaba en mi voluntad y en mi cuerpo! Tan acostumbrada

(1). Benavente, De sobremesa, Vol. I, pp.17-21.

estaba a obedecerle. que hasta, para deshonrarme le obedecí. ¿Qué iba a hacer yo? Lo que hice; lo que éa quiso. ¡Qué afortunadas son las obreras feas! A esas no les piden más que el trabajo". There is no help for the situation. ¿qué remedio? ¡Es la obligación! Si el sudor te ahoga, y el fósforo te asfixia, y el trabajo te mata, y tu carne se rompe a cachos, y tus huesos se parten a crujidos. ¡No importa! ¡Aguántate quee para eso te pagan! (1).

The effect of factory life on the workers is described even more comprehensively in De Piedra a Piedra. The laborers work incessantly, breathing poisonous air. Their faces are pale and their bodies anemic, and worst of all they starve their souls because they have become machine-like, devoid of intelligence. They come to work hopeless and return home exhausted. They have no time for living.

Dicenta describes the factory hands in a vivid way; un ejército de siervos que gimen bajo el látigo de la servidumbre y se consideran felices si durante la media hora de descanso que se les concede, tienen un cacho de pan y una debanada de tomate que llevar a la boca, y si cuando llegan a sus casas, con las

(1). Traperías, pp.21-23-24.

ropas empapadas en sudor y el alma en tristezas, hallan un camastro donde caer, donde quedar inmóviles, quietos, con sopor cadavérico de máquina de carne, a la que se ha acabado la cuerda". (1). Certainly this presents no very promising outlook for the future of such lives.

El desquite is an example of the rich taking advantage of the poor. The laborer works willingly until his employer dishonors his wife. In revenge, the injured man kills his employer and suffers punishment for it(2). Juan José, the masterpiece, is the most forceful picture of this same thing. Juan lives only for Rosa whom he loves dearly. Paco, Juan José's employer, decides that Rosa shall be his. When Rosa refuses to leave Juan José he revengefully dismisses the latter. Juan José steals in desperation, is arrested and imprisoned. Juan José hears Paco has succeeded in his purpose, escapes from prison, kills both Paco and Rosa and returns to prison. He gives up all hope of future happiness because he has lost his life and love by treachery. His friends want him to escape and he expresses his utter hopelessness as follows: "¡Huir! ¿Y para qué voy a huir? ¿Qué libro con huir? ¡La vida! ¡Mi vida era esto (por Rosa) y lo he matado!" (3). This is the most vivid and effective picture of the poor

(1). De Piedra a Piedra, p. 188.

(2). De la batalla, p. 115-116.

(3). Juan José, p. 110.

that Dicenta has attempted.

Dicenta also discusses the effects of this life of poverty and oppression on the people, and the means they take of bettering themselves. It depends largely upon the individual what course he takes. Some try to take revenge upon society by turning criminal; this is demonstrated by Juan José, who robbed after society had refused to let him honestly. By nature he hated crime but poverty and love drove him to it. The words of a laborer express the idea at the base of this attitude of the poor, "Si comen los ricos, que coman los pobres también." (1) That really is just because the poor do most of the producing. La última trinchera also shows the criminal effect of poverty. An ugly, old woman, moneyless and miserable is killed because a beggar took the doorstep, where she was accustomed to sleep, one night when she had money to pay for a bed elsewhere. The following night she returned to claim her old place and the beggar killed her. "Horrible, bárbaro es que se llegue a asesinar por eso. Pero es más horrible, más bárbaro aún, que la miseria y el desamparo conviertan a los hombres en tigres y los hagan asesinar por éso". (2).

(1). Los bárbaros, p. 199.

(2). Los de abajo, pp. 180-84.

Of Juan José Dicenta says: "El problema estaba resuelto, y como último término de la solución se leía esta palabra; "Crimen". ¡qué de razones no pudiera aducir en su favor aquella víctima de la sociedad que un crimen trajo al mundo para que otro crimen la arrancara de él".

Then another alternative presents itself. Some seek wider opportunities in a new land. In this connection Dicenta comments upon the recently reversed situation. In ancient times the barbarians invaded civilized lands because of hunger. Now hunger serves to drive population from civilized lands to newer and less civilized communities. There is something wrong with such a civilization. "En vez de colonizar nuestra tierra, nos metemos a colonizadores de extranjero país; en vez de demarroquizar a España, presumimos de europeizar a Marruecas. Así nos va; así se despuebla España de españoles. Lo raro es que aún algunos de los que en el trabajo personal ponensus medias de existencia!"(1) Chapman gives us a less pessimistic view of the matter, "It is customary even to charge the untoward events of daily life to the fault of bad government. Many factors have combined to bring about this state of mind; the very material progress of the country, resulting in a betterment of the condition of the poor, though their

(1) Mares de España, p. 103

lot is still far from being an enviable one, has awakened desire among the masses that thier ancestors never dreamed; and the relative prosperity of the returned Spanish emigrants, has led to a widespread belief that men can do better anywhere elsetthan under the bad government of Spain. The average Spaniard of the working classes takes little interest in his right of suffrage, for he in convinced that it makes no difference; he is hopeless and helpless in the face of the government which seems quite apart from him. (1)

He gives a very good reason for this emigration in Nubes, as he tells of a poor family that had been put out because they could not pay their rent: "Las veo; y pienso que es horrible que la organización social condene a los hombres a lo que la natural organización no condena a los animales; a quedarse sin nido, a no tener donde esconder su amor y donde empollar sus crías." (2)

The other reaction and the more general one is that the oppressed opposing their oppressors in an effort to change their conditon. Los bárbaros shows how hunger turned a whole district of people into barbarians who worked destruction on life and property. The condition of the poor in this case was not permanently helped at all. The strikers of Daniel were

(1) Chapman, History of Spain, p. 510

(2) De Piedra a Piedra, p. 218

willing to continue their opposition only so long as a promise of happiness was kept before them, but cold and hunger weakened their decision and made cowards of them. The laborers became timid and even suspicious of their best friend, the labor leader.

In La Catedral Blasco says of factory life: "El obrero de las fábricas convertido por un progreso desviado y fatal en esclavo de la máquina, vive junto a ella como una rueda más, como un resorte de carne, luchando su cansancio físico con la musculatura de hierro que no se fatiga embrutecido diariamente por la cadencia ensordecedora de los pistones y las ruedas para darnos los innumerables productos de la industria que resultan indispensables en la vida de la civilización."

Blasco pictures labor conditions and a strike just as vividly as does Dicenta, but he holds forth on it as a problem which affects the good of the whole of society, while Dicenta rebels and rages against the injustice of it as it affects individuals. One feels himself a spectator of the strike in La bodega. The master here has amassed a huge fortune in the wine industry, but he dominates his workmen body and soul. He even accompanies them to church so as to dictate their religious beliefs, and when they have any sort

of public gathering he places guard over them? At last the workers revolt. (1).

In El intruso Blasco tells of the oppression of the miners of Bilbao. With the advent of wealth came the Jesuits and then the town became a convent, life a perpetual Lent. The priests exploited the miners until only the wealthy could afford to attend services. The poor toilers now had to build luxurious homes for the clergy while they themselves lived in filth and squalor. The "company store" charged them double and triple prices. Their pay came by the month instead of by the week and this living on credit kept them in continual slavery.

Dicenta seems always concerned over the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. While in a church Dicenta is impressed with the unfairness of the inequalities, "Así pensaba yo, frente a aquellos símbolos de trabajo servil, del esfuerzo humano, esclavizado por la codicia, de la necesidad explotada por el egoísmo: mientras los ricos, los explotadores, los hartos, se arrodillaban ante un Dios, símbolo de fraternidad y justicia, para lucir, entre resplandores de cirios y nubes de incienso, galas y vanidades". (2)

(1). La bodega, p. 270-75.

(2). De Piedra a Piedra, p. 15.

This permeates his entire work, but the best expression of it is in a criticism of Dicenta's drama by Manuel Bueno, "Por lo demás, nuestra avidez sociológica no llega a advertir en el teatro de Dicenta más que esta sencilla verdad; que hay mucho dinero en pocos bolsillos y muchos bolsillos con poco o ningún dinero. Nada más. " (1).

Blasco frequently complains of the same thing, especially when the wealth came because of the submerging of the laboring class. "La injusta distribución del bienestar; el aumento de la miseria así como aumenta la civilización; el aprovecharse los poderosos de todos los inventos de la mecánica, ideados para suprimir el trabajo corporal y que sólo servían para hacerlo más pesado y embrutecedor; todos los males de la humanidad provenían de la apropiación de la tierra por unos cuantos miles de hombres que no siembran y sin embargo recogen, mientras millones de seres hacen abortar al suelo sus tesoros de vida, sufriendo un hambre de siglos y siglos." (2). He says the wealthy minority has falsified the principles of life for the poor majority and made them content to exist on whatever is left over after the masters are through, and hope

(1). Manuel Bueno, Teatro español contemporáneo, Madrid, 1909, p. 115.

(2) La bodega, p. 10.

for remuneration in the next life because of their meekness in this. He calls capital the egotistic majority.(1).

Again Blasco says, " ¡Oh la desigualdad! Salvatierra se enardecíó, abandonaba su flema bondadosa al pensar en las injusticias sociales. Centenares de miles de seres morían de hambre todos los años. La sociedad fingía saberlo, porque no caían de repente en medio de las calles como perros abandonados; pero morían en los hospitales, en sus tugurios víctimas en apariencia de diversas enfermedades; pero en el fondo ¡hambre! ¡ Y pensar que en el mundo había reservas de víveres para todos! ¡ Maldita organización que tales crímenes consentía!" --(2). So he complains of a selfishly blind society that refuses to see what it does not want to see, the misery and want of millions of beings who could be helped so much by the stores of provisions that are kept from year to year to force up prices, and for other economic stratagem.

In connection with the economic problems both Dicenta and Blasco speak of charity in a criticism of the way it is administered. The wealthy are moved, in the face of a great disaster, to help the poor.

(1). La Catedral, p. 171.

(2). La bodega, p. 10.

It relieves emotional stress and gives them something to think about, but that relief is only temporary, for the need continues long after the crisis has been forgotten. (1). Dicenta pleads, rather, for a justice which would make charity unnecessary in so far as it righted social evils. The widows of the men killed in the coal mine blast should have been free to demand their rights. (2). An old lady was refused entrance to several charitable institutions and at last falls dead of hunger in front of one of them. "La caridad ha hecho bancarrota." (3) La desdicha de Juan is another example. Juan, the father of a family was taken to an insane asylum because he was thought to be crazy. His children went to a home for orphans. After several years a young doctor cured him, and was nearly killed by the man because he so resented going back into a world of hard realities to fight for his livelihood. In his dementia he had thought that he was wealthy and that his children had all that he wanted them to have.

Blasco has a great deal to say as to charity. "Caridad es el egoismo disfrazándose de virtud; el sacrificio de una parte de lo superfluo repartido a capricho; es la más imponente y anémica de las virtudes.

(1). Los bárbaros, p. 189.

(2). Los de abajo, p. 225.

(3). Id. p. 37-40.

Unicamente la justicia social podría salvar a los hombres, y la justicia no es del cielo, sino de la tierra." (1).

The egotistic charity he illustrates by a religious festival planned for all of the laborers by the master on a holiday when they all wanted to go home and spend that little time they had with their families. The men were compelled to stay for the celebration. Doctor Aresti of El intruso says that charity is just another of the means of sustaining poverty and making it eternal. (2). "La caridad! Es el medio de sostener la pobreza, de fomentarla, haciéndola eterna. Los desgraciados la odian por instinto, evitan el buscarla mientras pueden, viendo en ella una institución degradante que perpetúa su esclavitud. Ese es otro de los fracasos de la moral cristiana".

So Blasco and Dicenta agree that what is needed is Justice and not Charity; a justice not of Heaven but of earth, (3). for Christianity has failed to uplift humanity, at least in Spain, so Blasco says in La bodega. (4). And this justice will eliminate the majority of the social ills of which they complain.

(1). La bodega, p. 148.

(2). El intruso, p. 257.

(3). La bodega, p. 150.

(4). Id. p. 205.

PRISON CONDITIONS.

Dicenta's chief criticism of the government appears in his analysis of the condition of penal institutions and the effect of such connections upon men. He criticises the method of procedure and the treatment of the prisoners. It is argued that dissertations on such subjects are futile. Rather, one should look to the causes of crime, to eliminate those; thus there would be no need of prisons. But Dicenta sees that it would take generations to educate the general public to such an extent as to prevent the causes of criminal acts. And so long as such institutions are needed why should they not be put upon such a basis that prisoners would not be turned out of them criminals, a thing they may not have been before? Another advantage of this course of action is that prisoners are real and tangible things, something easily gotten at comparatively, while social conditions are intangible and elusive.

In Salpicaduras he makes it clear that the government is responsible for the evils of Spanish life, for the criminals themselves accuse government officials of being accomplices in crimes which

it is their duty to prevent. (1). "Es vergonzoso que los criminales acusen de cómplices, encubridores y copartícipes en sus delitos, a los representantes de la autoridad, que tiene a su cargo evitarlos; más vergonzoso es todavía que esos mismo representantes de la autoridad, acusándose, descubriéndose unos a otros, prueben que la infamia alcanza materialmente a casi todos y a todos moralmente". They neglect their real duties and try to keep in popular favor. They cheat the government in a material way as often as possible. He explains that fault by saying that the Spaniard is dominated by a passion for gold, influence, favor and praise. He is too ignorant and selfish to realize that he, because he is a member of society, too, suffers as much as the others.

Dicenta's master drama, Juan José, demonstrates clearly the ineffective management of prisons. Juan José escapes at will and returned of his own volition and not because he was brought back by authorities. In the first place, the injustice of his being sent to prison is brought out. He was sent to prison because he had been caught in his first theft. He was not a habitual criminal, for he had committed the crime merely because society refused to let him live honestly. So he went to prison, to be sup-

(1). Los de abajo, p. 274.

ported by society, and in consequence he lost his honor, his strength, his self-respect, and even his desire to live. Society was to blame after all for his committing the greatest crime of all, murder.

El lobo, a somewhat over sentimental drama, is devoted to the question of prison reform. El lobo is the king of the prisoners and a hard old bandit who had always lived in the mountains with his dog. He hates everyone outside of the prison, and he feels that they are his enemies. Some of the prisoners attempt to escape, are caught and the warden comes to investigate the matter. His little daughter is with him and she sees El lobo knitting a sock and asks him to make some for her doll. Before she leaves she climbs on his knee and kisses him in a childishly trustful way. This is a turning point in the life of the prisoner; he had never known such tenderness before. He gets all the news of the child he can and makes things for her although he is ridiculed for it by his fellow prisoners. Another plan to escape, involving many of the prisoners comes to light, and in attempting to save the life of the warden El lobo is wounded fatally. He says he did it for the sake of the

little girl, Aurora. She is sent for and complies with his last request, by kissing him again. The purpose of the play seems to be to suggest how a bit of human kindness to a criminal may change him into a hero. It suggests that milder treatment of prisoners would produce better results. The men are not kept active and are not given anything to occupy their thoughts, so their minds are filled with hatred, and their thoughts dwell upon escape at any cost and by any means. They are miserable physically and mentally. Dicenta speaks of the sleeping quarters: "Cinquenta hombres por lado hay en el dormitorio central. Cuatro dormitorios arrancan del primero, dibujando una cruz. Al reflejo de los faroles es muestrario horrible el ofrecido por aquellos semblantes. Más se aproximan por su lineamiento y por su expresión a la bestia que al hombre". (1). Their beds are uncomfortable and dirty and the bed clothing is ragged and inadequate. The overseers are severe and domineering, and inspire hatred and rebellion instead of respect. Treated like beasts the prisoners become bestial. The system is ineffective, for convicts escape. And a worse feature than the escape is the fact that most of the prisoners released are worse criminals after a period of im-

(1). Paraíso, perdido, p. 27.

prisonment. This seems to apply especially to children.(1)

Because a child has once violated the law does not mean that he is a criminal. But if not tactfully handled he may repeat the offense. A child lacks the judgment of an older person and so should not be held responsible. He has so much of life before him and should be trained properly. A child stole four stockings and while his case was before the court, a period of four to ten months, he was sent to a reform school where he was instructed in criminal pursuits by older boys. "Allí entrará, para hacer el aprendizaje de su forzado oficio, entre catedráticos de catorce a diez y seis años. Allí estará aguardando las resoluciones de la justicia histórica, seis, ocho diez meses, y cuando salga de allí, cuando se le declare irresponsable, saldrá corregido, admirablemente corregido. Seguramente cuando salga no robará más calcetines. Ya le habrán enseñado a robar relojes". (2).

In Un vástago del Cid we have a poignant picture of the injustice of imprisoning children. A little boy had killed his father because the drunken brute was beating the child's mother and he could not endure it. His impulses were noble and worthy. Had he not

(1). Spoliarium, p. 41.

(2). Los de abajo, p. 218.

been imprisoned for the best part of his life he might have been a useful citizen.(1).

Dicenta says, "Mejor sería que la ley, aumentando escuelas, disminuyese cárceles; mejor sería que, sumando alumnos en las aulas, restara inquilinos a los presidios y a los garrotes; mejor sería que, evitando a las criaturashumanas convertirse en bestias, evitara que las bestias se hiciesen criminales". (2).

He brings in an interesting phase of social pathology,- the pleasure people seem to derive from watching executions, etc. Diversión gratuita shows that marching the prisoners through the streets for public display augments their hatred and disrespect for society. Men and women even go so far as to write the warden for good seats for the next execution. Other methods should be used, Dicenta thinks. (3).

The question of prison conditions is not so important to Blasco. He speaks of it as it relates to individuals. For one thing, he does not emphasize the squalor of the place. In fact, he rather contradicts Dicenta. "Lo que más le molestaba era la limpieza; aquel suelo barrido todos los días y bien

(1). Los de abajo, p. 75.

(2). Id., p. 105.

(3). Id. ,p.285.

fregado, para que la humedad, filtrándose a través del petate, se le metiera en los huesos; aquellas paredes en las que no se dejaba tener ni una mota de polvo. Hasta la compañía de la suciedad le quitaban al preso". (1). So he speaks in La condenada, the story of a criminal whose death penalty is commuted to one of life imprisonment. Here his wife was the condemned one because she could not support the family alone, and neither could she remarry as long as her husband lived, although he was a prisoner.

Un funcionario is the pitiful story of an executioner who is shunned by the world because of his vocation. His family, even, has suffered because of the scorn people feel for hangmen. (2).

Un hallazgo tells the story of "Magdalena", a criminal who is in for robbery. He tells how he last erred. One of his acquaintances wanted him to help in a robbery. At first he refused but finally acceded. He had been in prison before for petty thefts but had never committed any serious violation of the law. But on this particular occasion they found quite a lot of valuable loot and the other man was insistent on the matter of taking even the mattress. This Magdalena was carrying in a roll. Queer movements

(1). La condenada, p. 6.

(2). Id., p. 99.

inside of the bundle caused him to unwrap it when he got away from his companion and he found inside a tiny baby. He immediately went back to the house with the child, and in the process of replacing it on the bed from whence it came he was apprehended and of course, accused of the entire robbery. The real instigator of the crime went unpunished. This story serves, too, as a criticism of the treatment those men receive while in prison. He describes the brutality among the prisoners themselves, for the more desperate criminals form the aristocracy of the prison and wield a rather unusual power. (1).

(1). Luna Benamor, El hallazgo, p. 111.

EDUCATION.

Marcías Picavea who has thrust home in so many of his analyses of the causes of certain social evils, recognises that the solution for many ills of society lies in a better system of education. "If one examines the state of public and private establishments, entrusted with the instruction of the children, the sad reality becomes manifest" Primary education is wretched, almost no equipment, the teachers paid practically nothing, hence inadequate instruction. The pupils come out knowing no more than when they entered. The teachers do not have the right attitude toward their pupils or their work, but under the circumstances they can hardly be blamed. The general public considers secondary education unimportant, and the attitude of the students themselves is detrimental to their development. "Indeed, the imperfections and vices of Spanish education are reflected in a deplorable manner in national culture."(1).

Joaquín Costa recommends that the schools teach agriculture and specialized industries. He says they need better public schools to teach co-operation and the benefits of organization to all concerned.(2).

(1). Marcías Picavea, El problema nacional, pp.122-155.

(2) Joaquín Costa, La tierra y la cuestión social, p.178.

Giner de los Ríos sees the lack of sympathy between society and the schools as a reason for inefficiency of instruction. They are entirely separate and as education advances they become more uncooperative. The situation is a critical one.(1).

The 1921 report on illiteracy was astonishing. The percentage ranges from 50 on the Canary Islands to 25 in Madrid. This is largely due to the fact that so many pupils are attending private institutions.

Dicenta mentions the unsatisfactory results of education in private schools. Although public schools are considered too plebeian for any but the poorest people, yet instruction received there is much more thorough. In El idilio de Pedrín he illustrates this by the lives of twin brothers, one of whom was sent to a private school where he studied practically not at all, but received numerous awards for the purpose of convincing his parents that he was receiving good training. He completed his course in that way and ended by stealing all that his parents had saved for later years. The other brother went through public school where he received no awards, for there were none available, but learned much by hard work and experience. He work-

(1). Giner de los Ríos, La Universidad Española, p.66.

ed and repaid his parents for the amount taken by his brother.(1).

Then El sino illustrates again the same thing, except that the brother who received his education in public school became the great astronomer.

However, public school instruction is not universal. A great many children get no education at all. Those who do must study in unsanitary buildings where they are "driven" by over-worked and under paid teachers. Education is neglected both in the city and in the rural districts.(2). In *Mares de España*, Dicenta sets forth his ideal of instruction. It is an open air school where the children are kept healthy and happily occupied; where teachers are sympathetic and find pleasure in their work; where the youngsters learn because it is interesting and inspiring. But such education is non-existent in Spain. (3).

Blasco feels that the backward state of education in Spain is due to the fact that such enormous sums of money are spent on the Church. He says in *Entre Naranjos*, "En Madrid, en la capital, a la vista de todos ellos, las escuelas instaladas en inmundos zaquizamis, iglesias y conventos surgiendo de la noche a la mañana como

(1). *El idilio de Pedrín*, p. 18.

(2). *Id.*, p. 18.

(3). *Mares de España*, pp. 37-38.

palacios encantados en las principales calles. En ventitantos años de Restauración, más de cincuenta edificios religiosos completamente nuevas, estrechando la capital con una cintura de edificios flamantes; y en cambio una sola escuela moderna, como la de cualquier población pequeña de Inglaterra o Suiza". (1).

Only one school built in twenty odd years in contrast with fifty buildings for religious purposes. He goes on to speak of the type of youth produced by the system of education. "La juventud débil, apagada, egoísta y devota, contrastando con sus padres, que adoraban los generosos ideales de la libertad y la democracia y hacía revoluciones. El hijo, envejecido, con el pecho lleno de medallas, sin más vida intelectual que las reuniones de cofradía, confiando su porvenir y su voluntad al jesuita introducido en la familia por la madre". (2).

In El intruso Blasco realizes that education is the best means of progress, but he recognizes, too, that popular education is a slow process, indeed. Something radical should be done to arouse the Spanish people to action so that they may be on a par with other European nations. Spain's thoroughly grounded traditions are a handicap to any rapid progress.

(1). Entre naranjos, p. 267.

(2). Id. p. 267.

El Maestrico of La bodega is an interesting character in his progressive ideas. He realizes the power of education, and says the poor are down-trodden because they are ignorant. "Todo lo que nos pasa a los pobres es porque no sabemos. El mundo es del que más sabe, ¿verdad, don Fernando? Si los ricos son fuertes y nos pisan y hacen lo que quieren, no es solamente porque tienen el dinero, sino porque saben más que nosotros.--- Estos ricos que vemos de cerca son unos peleles, y sobre ellos están los otros, los verdaderos ricos, los que saben, los que hacen las leyes del mundo, y sostienen ese intríngulis de que unos cuantos lo tengan todo mientras la gran mayoría no tiene nada? Si los trabajadores engañan, les harían frente a todos horas, y cuando menos, los obligarían a que se partiesen el poder con ellos". (1).

El Nacional of Sangre y arena reasons in the same way. He has been convinced that the injustices to the poor are due to their ignorance and he urges the necessity of the lower classes knowing how to read and write, less money spent on bull fights and more on education. Both he and El Maestrico are scorned for their firm belief in the power of knowledge. (2).

(1). La bodega, p. 138-39.

(2). Sangre y arena, p. 98-99.

Both Blasco and Dicenta are upheld in the position on the question of education, by actual statistics and by authorities. It is agreed that one reason for the backward condition in Spain of their time was illiteracy and superstition.

Lack of general education is always one of the causes of crime, because the people need to be educated into an observance of law. Because the lower classes are ignorant and illiterate the so-called Capital class is able to exploit them. All of these various conditions together make charity a necessity and at the same time an unsatisfactory order of things. The ideas of Dicenta and Blasco on these related social and economic factors will be discussed.

C O N C L U S I O N .

The results of the investigation will be more clearly set forth in tabular form, as follows:

AGRARIAN PROBLEM:

Blasco,- Absentee landlord system deplored. The workers cannot willingly work fields when they will never have a share of the profits.

Dicenta,- Labor on farms is exploited cruelly. Not a fair division of the profits. Men treated like beasts.

RELATIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN:

Blasco,- Women are usually selfish and centered mainly upon themselves, and their own vain interests. One woman can wreak havoc on many men. They are not significant figures in his works.

Dicenta,- People must love but that emotion causes greatest part of suffering in the world. Free relations not best from standpoint of man, woman or child, but marriage is not always a solution of the problem.

RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS:

Blasco,- The Church is responsible for the failure of Spain to progress more rapidly. Is a financial burden. Appeals too much to superstition and fear. Still a hatred between Jew and Gentile.

Dicenta,-The monastic orders are a drawback to the material progress of Spain. The Church a tumor of stone on the epidermis of the country.

DRINK, GAMBLING AND THE BULL FIGHT:

Blasco,- Very opposed to drink as it dulls men's higher sensibilities. Gambling a vice that should be modified. Bull fights a condemnation of the ideals and standards of a people that need that sort of thing for a diversion. They are a good demonstration of the mob psychology.

Dicenta,-Not much said about drink, but says a man not used to drinking may cause more harm than an habitual drinker. Does not condemn bull fights, they are safety valves to relieve barbaric instincts, not any worse than other spectacles of brutality.

INDUSTRY:

Blasco,- The life of the factory hands is the chief complaint of Blasco. He objects, especially, to child labor.

Dicenta,-Miners especially are treated unfairly and not given even the necessities of life. Factory life is not so bad as he sees it.

DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH:

Blasco,- His chief grievance is that there is a great deal of money in the pockets of a few and there are a great many who are in want.

Dicenta,-Both here complain of the unequal distribution of wealth and the concentration of large sums in the hands of a few.

EDUCATION:

Blasco,- Too few public schools and not enough pay for the teachers. Education is a way to solve many social problems.

Dicenta,-Poor conditions for public education is laid to the monopoly by private schools.

PRISON CONDITIONS:

Blasco,- Living conditions not so bad as are painted by Dicenta, but the prisoners are kept too long before sentence is passed. They are not kept busy.

Dicenta,-Miserable living conditions in prisons.

Wrong sort of treatment of inmates. More consideration. Small boys should not be sent to prison because the influence is bad.

CHARITY:

Blasco,- Charity not needed as much as justice. But the justice must be of earth, not of Heaven.

Dicenta,-Charity is not administered so as to create the proper spirit. It is too spasmodic.

SOCIETY IN GENERAL:

Blasco,- Society is at fault in some phases of its organization but the individuals themselves are partially responsible because they do nothing to correct these ills.

Dicenta,-Society is bestial and by its terrible abuse of the individual , works all the evils that exist. The individual has no responsibility, does nothing but complain.

It must be remembered in the final analysis that though these problems are spoken of as being those of Spain in particular, it is so merely because we are dealing with Spanish authors and their subjects naturally

reflect back to the conditions as they see them in their own country. The reader of some English books may gain an opinion just as sordid as that given by Dicenta and Blasco. However, with the possible exception of the religious question we may say that these problems are common to any country and any people. We find them elsewhere as in Spain, in more or less modified degrees.

Dicenta and Blasco, both of whom would be social reformers through the medium of literature, have found in common many causes of complaint against society. But their reactions are very different. There are few writers who put less blame upon the individual and more upon society than does Dicenta. There is a fallacy there in his reasoning. He feels that the very birth of an individual validates his right to live. He has perhaps overlooked the thought that society is made up of individuals and that because one man alone is not equipped either mentally or physically to fight life's battles single handed there are many mutual responsibilities. Dicenta may recognize that fact but he chooses to ignore it, considering men as independent of group thought and action. Dicenta closes his eyes and sees a spider that has caught a fly in its web.

The fly is struggling vainly to release itself and its struggles only entangle it more completely. To Dicenta, the spider signifies society and the fly the individual, and he says, "El acto de nacer implica el derecho de vivir, lo mismo en la araña como en el hombre". (1). But here he seems to contradict himself, justifying the spider in catching the fly. Another factor that Dicenta apparently has overlooked is that of the individual differences of mentality and moral sense of people. As far as the reader can see from the study of his novels and plays, men are all alike. He does not distinguish between them, and they all react in just the same way to their fortunes and misfortunes. He does not admit that there are differences in the ways in which men may look upon the development of their experiences. But at least he does admit that there are several ways in which people combat the poor living conditions; some leave the country for newer and broader fields, others resort to crime as a revenge upon society, while others organize to fight the evil in a sensible manner. Yet he fails to take into account that a man by his own acts is largely responsible for his happiness or misfortune. He allows the impression to remain that Juan José was justified in his killing two people because society had wronged

(1). Spoliarium, p. 20

him, as though that were any satisfaction. Pablo and Cesárea in Daniel are relentlessly opposed by Fate in their effort to be happy, yet their sacrifice is in vain because of society. Dicenta's view of society is a hopeless one and his characters are all like flies struggling in a web. Their efforts are in vain. Daniel, Hortensia, Encarnación all expend their efforts and gain no reward at all. But on the other hand, Dicenta has passages where he indulges in childish flights of imagination of utopian conditions for the future. In Puesta de sol he sees poor and rich children playing together in the street and they watch a rosy sunset, forecast of a brighter future, less work and more food, harmony of social intercourse. Familia pictures a laborer and those dependent upon him, not wife and children, no blood relation at all, but an idealistic group that promises much for the future; the young work for the support of the old because the latter once cared for them. On the other hand, it may be that these passages seem brighter only because of the contrast with his usual gloomy view of the world. He has the attitude of the man who has been constantly mistreated and consequently expects to see no good in the world. There is a constant ungracious struggle and uproar but no constructive work done, people are too busy feeling sorry for themselves. Nothing is

accomplished. For one thing he has chosen subjects that are impossible of solution rather than problems that might be worked out by a little public education.

He feels that genius is seldom rewarded, and that there is no real appreciation of artistic and beautiful things. He speaks of Cervantes as of other men of outstanding merit, in the light of gladiators in the arena and he says, "Horrible existencia la de este gladiador sublime, que rueda maltrecho por la arena ensangrentada del circo social". (1). They struggle against conditions and are in the end forgotten as are all the vanquished gladiators. (2). The men of genius must give up their ideals and aspirations to earn a crust of bread. His attitude is an entirely pessimistic one in that he believes that there is no reward either for good or wrong doing and that there is no premium set upon achievement.

Dicenta says that society is in just such a condition as that of an organism in an advanced state of decomposition; it cannot be examined closely without revealing alarming signs of decay. (3).

Blasco reasons more coldly. He sees the mutual obligations of society and the individual and realizes that individuals, because of their complacence are allowing conditions to exist that they might by their

(1). Spoliarium, p. 54.

(2). L. Bonafoux, introduction to Spoliarium, p. 10.

(3). Los de abajo, p. 273.

efforts help to correct. He is not blind to the realities of life which are present in the constant struggle of the elements as well as among men. It is a matter of the survival of the fittest and Blanco sets out to help the number of the fit to increase. Dicenta merely wails about these crashings of antagonism that balance life. To Blasco the lower classes seem to be in a lethargic condition and because of this inactivity there arise such situations that create unfavorable living conditions and then they only complain of them instead of setting about to right the wrong. This is the very spirit of Dicenta and Blasco argues against such an attitude. He shows the ordinary working man unconcerned over the ballot. He is more interested in the bull fight in Sangre y arena than he is in his right of suffrage, and instead of feeling that it is his privilege to help correct these unpleasant features of society and government, he stands on the street corner and talks with other men about the leading toreador of the day. By his line of argument Blasco suggests remedies for these evils. His effort to reform society and social customs is not so much because of pity for the individual as it is because society as a whole needs to be awakened. He aims at one social evil at a time, and looks at that

in a far more unbiased point of view than does Dicenta. He does not choose matters that defy solution, the relation between the sexes, for example. His ideas are concrete and he has definite plans. His characters are individuals and fit well the case they are chosen to illustrate, while those of Dicenta are identical from one play to another.

Dicenta has given a good expression of the relation between society and the individual in Crónicas as he says, "No es una aspiración, no es un deseo, no es súplica; es un clamor que llega a todas partes, que se entra por todos los oídos, que llama a todas las conciencias honradas y golpea en todos los cerebros pensadores. Es un alarido formidable que viene de abajo con vibraciones de angustia y de cólera; que infunde piedad y causa espanto; piedad porque lo arranca el dolor; espanto porque lo provoca la injusticia. Es la inmensa portesta de una humanidad pisoteada por otra humanidad; son los miserables, los explotados, los hambrientos, los sin ventura, que gritan encarándose con los potentados, con los explotadores, son los hartos, con los felices: ¿Hasta cuándo va durar esto? ¡Basta de martirio; no podemos, no queremos sufrirlo más! (1).

(1). Crónicas, pp.191-2.

The method of attack of these two authors differ greatly. Dicenta is impulsive, impetuous, gloomy. He is very much subject to the responses of his senses and his emotions. He is a sentimental romanticist. His impulsiveness prevents his carefully analyzing the causes of a situation and working out a means of improving the conditions. His view is one-sided and biased in favor of the down-trodden individual. Thus he cannot be a true and effective reformer. L. Bonafoux says of him: "Pero lo mismo en la vida pública que en la vida privada, Dicenta forma en las filas de esta vanguardia derrevolucionarios que son primero niños sublimes que miran el ayer ni se preocupan del mañana; después jóvenes generosos que derrochan el talento como derrochan la vida, y en fin combatientes aguerridos que, polvorientos y sangrando marchana buen paso hacia la montaña del ideal, dejando atrás el pasado y diciendo: ¡Muera! "(1). He cries for an ideal that he does not exert the brain power to create. And because he is so childishly idealistic and yet so sordid he does not give the proper aspect to events. Juan José, his most significant character was first a thief and then a murderer; one murder committed because of jealousy and the other because of a foolish sense of "pundonor."

(1). Spoliarium, p. 2.

It is pictured as the fault of society that he had to steal. He had not trained himself to do anything but what this one man, Paco, could give him to do. Then because his common-law wife left him was no reason that he must necessarily kill the man who took her away from him. But Dicenta, who has seen the situation in a frenzy of indignation, that living and working conditions of the poor should be so miserable, writes of it as the logical and inevitable outcome. Due to this inconsistency and biased point of view Dicenta's work fails to be constructive. It is indeed, a crying out against conditions of the social organization, and against injustices, and only a cry.

Manuel Ugarte says of him; "Es el poeta de la miseria. Ha vivido en la atmósfera del arrabal, ha visto las escenas lúgubres de las guardillas y las tabernas, ha sentido el estremecimiento de dolor y de cólera de los vencidos y los desterrados. Cuando la multitud se arremolina o se agrieta agotada por huracanes de pensamientos, sundo en las noches heladas vemos una mujer infeliz que apura la labor empujada por el hambre, cuando los niños pálidos nos piden pan en las encrucijadas de las iglesias, todos sentimos un relámpago de bondad y de ternura dentro del alma.

Pero pasado ese instante, muy pocos sueñan en cuajar la sensación, en transmitir el sacudimiento a los demás hombres, en enternecer, en lanzarse a la lucha y en esgrimir la lágrima como piqueta demoledora. Dicenta ha comprendido la necesidad de dar voz a los que no la tienen, y se han convertido en verbo de las mayorías angustiadas. En sus obras como en el fondo del mar o de la plebe borbullea una confusión de cosas contradictorias, primitivas, tiernas, ásperas, ingenuas, feroces, un desborde de vida real que subyuga al lector y le entusiasma. Sus concepciones brillan, no se sabe si como navajas o como rayos de luna, sobre la sombra de la vida. Es, para la muchedumbre el amigo, y el educador, el compañero y el guía." (1) Dicenta may rightly be called the poet of the miserable and the exponent of the unfortunate. Because he himself suffered he sees but suffering. His themes are always of the lower classes. Manuel Bueno has said of him, "De él data entre nosotros el teatro de los humildes, pues ha sido el primer autor dramático que, sin desprenderse de la levadura romántica que hay en su temperamento ha fijado una mirada de simpatía y de piedad en el bajo pueblo y le ha hecho intervenir en la obra escénica." (2) He sees the lowest aspects of life. He is sordid in

(1) Manuel Ugarte, Visiones de España, p. 135

(2) Manuel Bueno, Teatro español contemporáneo, p. 112

his pictures of suffering which he could raise to epic altitudes but really lowers to miserable levels with his non-constructive, passive, impotent cries.

Blasco has been accused of being ungrammatical and vulgar. This may aptly apply to the actual form of his propaganda novels but there is a justification for it. His work may be divided into three periods. The first was the time of the production of his regional novels, the artistry of which is hardly questioned. Then the second period is characterized as that of the propaganda novels. The third and last period contained merely historical novels or those for entertainment. It is with the second period that we have here been most concerned. The explanation offered for the apparent cheapness of some of these novels is that they were written for a very definite purpose. He saw the prevalent evils of society and desired to remedy them. The best way of effecting a cure for social ills is to reach the masses, and so to teach them. Blasco, therefore, wrote in a language that the masses could understand and chose for his characters people from the mob. He is a naturalist but not of the school of Zola. He excels in that field. Manuel Ugarte said of Blasco in refutation of the criticism that he was too universal, a novelist, polemic, judge, man of

action with the book, with the periodical, with the word and with the gesture, and a great distributor of beauty, reason, enthusiasm and justice: "Algunos le reprochan esa universalidad. Acostumbrados a los hombres monocordes, especialistas y fragmentarios que no tienen más que una función y un gesto, les sorprende que puedan coexistir en un mismo individuo tantas diferentes aptitudes. No sospechan que en la sociedad de mañana, cuando consigamos desarrollar librement toda nuestra actividad y vivir a plenos pulmones, esto que hoy resulta excepción será con mayor o menor intensidad la regla. Blasco Ibáñez llevado por su carácter altruística, ha distribuido sus riquezas a todos los vientos, ha dejado su huella en todas partes, ha entrado y salido por todas las puertas de la vida." (1)

Hence we have the secret of the differences in the mode of approach to a subject of Dicenta and Blasco. Dicenta, impulsive and biased in favor of the individual; Blasco, coolly reasoning and interested in the welfare of society as a whole and the individual only so far as he goes to make a point. Because he sees only one side of life, the sordid one, the selfish one, Dicenta fails in those points wherein Blasco succeeds magnificently.

(1) Manuel Ugarte, Visiones de España, p. 115

Joaquín Dicenta y Benedicto.

<u>Los de abajo</u>	Madrid	1913.
<u>Aurora</u>	Ibid	1900.
<u>De la batalla</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Por Bretaña</u>	Ibid	1910.
<u>La confesión</u>	Ibid	1908.
<u>El crimen de ayer</u>	Ibid	1908.
<u>Crónicas</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Cuentos</u>	Ibid	1900.
<u>Curro Vargas</u>	Ibid	1898.
<u>Daniel</u>	Ibid	1906.
<u>Encarnación</u>	Ibid	1913.
<u>Espumas y plomo</u>	Ibid	1903.
<u>La finca de los muertos</u>	Ibid	1904.
<u>El idilio de Pedrín</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Idos y muertos</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>La infanticida</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Los irresponsables</u>	Ibid	1892.
<u>Juan Francisco</u>	Ibid	1908.
<u>Juan José</u>	Ibid	1895.
<u>El lobo</u>	Ibid	1914.
<u>Luciano</u>	Ibid	1894.
<u>Mares de España</u>	Ibid	1913.
<u>Mujeres</u>	Ibid	1907.
<u>Páginas de oro</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Paraíso perdido</u>	Ibid	1907.
<u>De Piedra a Piedra</u>	Ibid	1905.
<u>Entre rocas</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>Desde los rosales</u>	Ibid	1906.
<u>Sobrevivirse</u>	Ibid	1913.
<u>Spoliarium</u>	Ibid	1891.
<u>Traperías</u>	Ibid	1905.

Vicente Blasco y Ibañez.

<u>Arroz y tartana</u>	Valencia	n.d.
<u>La barraca</u>	Ibid	1918.
<u>La bodega</u>	Ibid	1914.
<u>Cañas y barro</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>La catedral</u>	Ibid	1918.
<u>La condenada</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>Cuentos Valencianos</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>Los enemigos de la mujer</u>	Ibid	n.d.
<u>La horda</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>El intruso</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>La maja desnuda</u>	Ibid	1918.
<u>Los muertos mandan</u>	Ibid	1914.
<u>El préstamo de la difunta</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>La reina Calafia</u>	Ibid	1918.
<u>Sangre y arena</u>	Ibid	1916.
<u>La tierra de todos</u>	Ibid	1916.

General references:

- Altamira y Crevea, Rafael
Historia de España Madrid, 1898.
- Barja, Cesar
Libros y autores modernos, Ibid 1925.
- Bell, Aubrey F.G.
Contemporary Spanish Literature, N.Y. 1925.
- Benaventa, Jacinto
De sobremesa, Madrid, 1910.
- Blasco García, Francisco
La literatura española Ibid 1903.
- Bueno, Manuel
Teatro español contemporáneo, Ibid 1909.
- Cejador y Frauca, Julio
Historia de la lengua y literatura castellana, Ibid 1919.
- Chapman, Charles Edward
A History of Spain, N.Y. 1918.
- Costa, Joaquín
La tierra y la cuestión social, Madrid, 1912.
- Dario, Ruben
España contemporánea, Paris, 1901.
- Deakin, Frank b.
Spain To-Day, N.Y. 1924.
- Ellis, Henry Havelock
The Soul of Spain, London 1908.
- Fitzmaurice-Kelly, James
Chapters on Spanish Literature, N.Y. 1913.
- Giner de los Rios, Francisco
La Universidad española, Madrid, 1916.
- Gonzalez Blanco, Andres
Historia de la novela en España desde el Romanticismo a nuestros días, Madrid, 1909.
- Hume, Martin
The Spanish People, N.Y. 1906.
- León Pagano, José
Al través de la España literaria, Barcelona, 1904.

General references, continued.

- Marcías Picavea, Ricardo
El Problema nacional,
New International Encyclopedia Madrid, 1899.
- Nöel, Eugenio
Señoritos chulos Ibid 1916.
- Northrup, George Tyler
An Introduction to Spanish Literature, Chicago, 1925.
- Pitollet, Camilo
V. Blasco Ibáñez, Valencia, n.d.
- Turrell, Charles Alfred
Contemporary Spanish Dramatists, Boston, 1919.
- Ugarte, Manuel
Visiones de España, Valencia, n.d.
- Zamacois, Eduardo
Mis contemporáneos, Madrid, 1910.

I N D E X .

Los de abajo, 13, 73, 113

El grisú, 96

El modorro, 99

La última trinchera, 106

Salpicaduras, 115

Agrarian situation, 15

absentee landlord, 26

La barraca, 31

Blasco's solution, 30

land-holding, 17, 18

landlords, 26

Moors, 18

Aniversario negro, 12

Aurora, 12, 103

Los bárbaros, 12

agricultural question, 20, 24

charity, 113

strike, 27, 108

De la batalla, 13, 83, 84, 105

La barraca, 9, 13, 32

Benavente, Jacinto, 103

Blasco, 1

comparison with Dicenta, 133, 139

bullfight, 92

drinking, 84

economic question, 95

gambling, 88

idea of society, 136

life, 7

naturalistic tendency, 10

periods of work, 8, 142

style, 12

women, 58

La bodega, 13, 20, 28, 29, 30, 76, 84, 109, 112, 114, 127

L. Bonafoux, 139

Bueno, Manuel, 141

Bullfights, 13, 88, 90

caciquismo, 18

Cañas y barro, 13

Catholicism, 73

Los de abajo, 73

celibacy of priests, 74

La Catedral, 14, 28, 62

Church, 65

communistic ideas, 31

inequalities, 112

factory, 109

plot, 69

poverty, 72

revolutionary doctrines, 71

Cejador y Frauca, 6

Chapman, Charles Edward, 87

Charity, 112

Los de abajo, 113

La bodega, 113

El intruso, 114

Church, 14

Blasco, 63, 69

La catedral, 65

despotism, 72

Dicenta, 68

financial status, 64, 73

history of power, 64

De Piedra a Piedra, 67

revolution needed, 78

La condenada, 9, 121

Joaquin Costa, 17, 123

Crime, 106

children, 119

Juan José, 106, 116

Salpicaduras, 115

El crimen de ayer, 46

Crónicas, 12, 95, 96, 138

Los cuatro jinetes del Apoclipis, 8

Cuentos valencianos, 9

Daniel, 56, 101, 108

Darío, Rubén, 11, 16

Dicenta, 1

comparison with Blasco, 133, 139

economic question, 95

his loves, 42

idea of society, 135, 136

life, 2

prison conditions, 115

society, 6

style, 12

theater, 5

Un divorcio, 53

Drink, 13

La bodega, 30, 84

Paraíso perdido, 83

Economic question, 95

emigration, 107, 108

factory life, 109

Huilliez, 95

inequalities, 110, 112

labor and capital, 95, 103, 112

mining, 95 ff., 110

strike, 27, 102, 108, 109

Education, 73, 123

Ellis, Henry Havelock, 66, 68

Encarnación, 42

Los enemigos de la mujer, 13, 58, 88

Entre naranjos, 125, 126

Espumas y plomo, 12, 98

Lluvia de plomo, 97

Montones de sal, 97

salt and lead mines, 96

Fitzmaurice-Kelly, James, 11

Gambling, 83, 88

Giner de los Ríos, 124

Government, 115

Idos y muertos, 84

- Illiteracy, report, 124
La infanticida, 38, 48, 53
El intruso, 13, 14, 74, 110, 113, 126
Los irresponsables, 2
 Jesuits, 74, 77
 Jew and Gentile, 79, 80, 81
Juan José, 2, 3, 12, 39, 40, 101, 105, 106, 107, 139
Juan Francisco, 56
 León Pagano, José, 4, 10
El lobo, 13, 117
Luciano, 51, 56
El Lujo, 61
Luna Benamor, 80, 121
Mare nostrum, 8
 Marcías Picavea,
 education, 123
 land, 16
 Spanish temperament, 58
Mares de España, 12, 125
Los muertos mandan, 81, 79
Mujeres, 37, 55
Dos naturalezas, 46
 Noël, Eugenio, 18
Paraíso perdido, 12, 13, 83
De piedra a piedra, 12, 20, 22, 24, 41, 108
 Prison reform, 13, 115, 118
 Juan José, 116
 living conditions in prisons, 118
 El lobo, 117
 Salpicaduras, 115

Relations bewtween the sexes, 36

Blasco, 58 ff.

common law marriage, 42

double standard, 48

egotism of men, 46

faithless man, 41

La infanticida, 38

love, 36, 37, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57

marriage, 36, 37, 50, 51, 54, 55

women to blame, 46

Sangre y arena, 13, 90

education, 127

history of the bullfight, 90

plot, 91

society, 137

El sino, 50, 55, 125

Spoliarium, 13, 134, 139

El suicidio de Werther, 2

Tabular summary, 129

La tierra de todos, 60

El tiesto de rosas, 56

Traperías, 12, 22, 104

El triunfo de la condesa, 54

Ugarte, Manuel, 140

Mi Venús, 52

Wealth, 15, 111

World War, 63

Zamacois, Eduardo, 11

Zola, 142